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Being and Knowing in Wholeness

Chinese Chan, Tibetan Dzogchen, and the Logic of Immediacy in Contemplation

by

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ABSTRACT

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Responding to onto-theology, Eliot Deutsch proposes the idea of "knowing religiously," stating "religious knowledge doesn't so much have a distinctive or special object as it has a unique style or manner ... a reverential knowing that is centered in reality." Based on the teachings of Chinese Chan and Tibetan Dzogchen, this dissertation builds upon Deutsch's premise to investigate the mechanism of 'im-mediate' knowing, or the logic of immediacy, in contemplation and philosophical expression.

In particular, this dissertation shows that the meaning of one's being lies in spontaneous self-or-open awareness rather than in a highest being or transcendental divinity. Similar to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's "*question-knowing*," this open awareness has "an original manner of aiming at something," for it inspires one to embrace all but reify none. With this non-reifying-yet-all-embracing awareness, one's relationship with Being is embodied in a nondual dynamic, in which one unfolds being and knowing in wholeness. This holistic relationship is the insight derived from the logic of immediacy. It also provides an alternative paradigm to explore the nature of religious knowledge.

This dissertation also shows that the logic of immediacy does not reject nominal intermediaries. Rather, it employs them in specific ways so that immediacy is realized without the dualistic bondages and conceptual limitations implied by methods of mediation. As this understanding is seen via a contemplative perspective, it offers an

alternative to the sociopolitical perspective in extending our reach beyond the sectarian and the historical so that we can better appreciate the nuances of the teachings and the values of religious developments.

Since the complex set of theses regarding the experience and thematization of immediacy emerges over time and in conversation with thinkers from different quarters of the religious-philosophizing spectrum, the narration of this dissertation starts with an origin narrative and an exemplar of the logic of immediacy in Chan. Following the footsteps of Chan monks westwards, it delves into the development and teachings of sTon mun, a tradition of encounter between Chinese Chan monks and Tibetan tantric practitioners. It concludes this tracing of the logic of immediacy with the early teachings of Dzogchen which emphasizes spontaneity.

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At Rice, my study has been both demanding and inspirational. Many hardworking hours and insightful discussions have made my "Rice era" truly memorable.

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Introduction

I. The Logic of Immediacy in Contemplation and Its Significance

A. Being and Knowing in Wholeness as an Alternative to Being in Onto-Theology

Martin Heidegger once wrote that Western philosophy has been dominated by what he called "onto-theology," a descendent of Greek philosophy and Christian theology.[1] Under the influence of this onto-theology, religious knowledge in the West naturally has been filled with notions centering on a transcendent/highest being and/or God. It is only recently that philosophers and religious scholars have started to re-think this onto-theo-centrality by introducing different religious epistemologies, mostly from the teachings of Western mystical or Asian traditions.[2] Learning from the Hindu philosophy of Advaita Vedānta, Chinese philosophy, and Western mystical traditions, American philosopher Eliot Deutsch thus proposes the idea of "knowing religiously"; he writes,

> My general thesis is that religious knowledge doesn't so much have a distinctive or special object as it has a unique style or manner. Knowing religiously, I shall argue, is a reverential knowing that is centered in reality. It involves wonder, openness, insight, and love; it brings about a transformation of our ordinary knowledge and the achievement of a kind of "unknowing knowing" that issues in a liberated creativity.[3]

Participating in this conversation on "knowing religiously," this dissertation asks

[1] Generally speaking, Heidegger considers onto-theology the same as metaphysics. But he also thinks that to intermix ontology and theology is problematic at least on two aspects. First, when the philosophical and the theological are intermingled, philosophy, as the discourse of dialectic reasoning, is confined by an economy of faith, whereas theology, as the discipline of trans-rational faith, is reduced to the order of beings. More fundamentally, for Heidegger, onto-theology contributes to the degeneration of Western thought and the consequent troubles of technological culture by presuming knowledge regarding the "first cause" of philosophy and the "highest being" of theology. For his detailed discussion on the subject of onto-theology, see, *e.g.*, Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*. See also, his *Being and Time* and *The End of Metaphysics*.

[2] See, *e.g.*, Westphal, *Transcendence and Self-Transcendence* and *Overcoming onto-theology toward a postmodern Christian faith*, and the references therein.

[3] Deutsch, "Knowing Religiously," 22.

similar questions: Based upon the "Wholly Other" in Otto's sense,[4] must religious knowledge center on "a distinctive or special object"? As the ultimate concern in Tillich's sense,[5] must religion be founded upon a metaphysical Godhead? Must the meaning of one's wholeness depend upon an objectified or metaphysical highest being as onto-theology emphatically underscores? Can there be an alternative? If there is, what might it be? How does it offer us something different, and why is it important?

Learning from the teachings of two Buddhist traditions, namely, Chinese Chan (Ch. *chan* 禪) and Tibetan Dzogchen (Tib. *rdzogs chen*),[6] this dissertation proposes an alternative understanding, in which the wholeness of one's being does not necessarily depend upon an objectified highest being; rather, it is informed by one's 'im-mediate' (*i.e.*, unmediated) knowing. Such a knowing, Chan and Dzogchen both teach, resonates with the suchness of reality and manifests, within the practitioner, qualities similar to Deutsch's "wonder, openness, insight, and love" so that the practitioner acts fittingly according to the surrounding conditions, yet without being conditioned or confined by them. As such, the 'im-mediate' knowing is also the ultimate being. In mutual interfusion and permeation, one's being and knowing seamlessly manifest in their natural wholeness.

Thus, this dissertation builds upon Deutsch's premise of "knowing religiously" to investigate the mechanism of the said 'im-mediate' knowing, or what I call the logic of immediacy, both in contemplation and in philosophical expression. Generally speaking, immediacy, as a contemplative idea, refers to a direct cognition of reality, including the

[4] For Rudolf Otto's understanding of "Wholly Other," see, *e.g.*, Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, 25-30.
[5] For Paul Tillich's understanding of "ultimate concern" as something based on "God above God," see, *e.g.*, Tillich, *The Courage to Be*, 186-190.
[6] In the dissertation, transliteration will be given according to its context. Basically, I will try to give Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan equivalent terms if the context is applicable. Otherwise, only its applicable languages will be given.

reality of oneself, without any mediation. It appears in a form of self-awareness which further indicates that one's state of being is imbued in one's knowing as an integral whole. Accordingly, as a category of analysis, immediacy also depicts a nondual dynamic, in which being and knowing are fully integrated within the unified matrix of subject-object reality. This 'nondual dynamic' characterization, as shown later, offers us a hermeneutic tool to explore contemplative teachings following the logic of immediacy in a way that is philosophically meaningful and cognitively accessible. It also provides a shared paradigm for us to compare similar teachings distinctively presented in different religious traditions such as our subjects, Chinese Chan and Tibetan Dzogchen.

I have chosen Chan and Dzogchen for this project not only because of their doctrinal emphasis on ideas of immediacy such as suddenness and spontaneity, but also because of the historical connection between them, as established by the Dunhuang manuscripts discovered at the turn of the 20th century in Northwest China. For, if there is a conceptually complex set of theses regarding the experience and thematization of immediacy, one would expect this to be a discourse that emerges over time, and in conversation with other thinkers from different quarters of the religious-philosophizing spectrum of the time. And this is indeed the case. In consequence, the narration of the dissertation will start with a development and an exemplar of the idea of immediacy, or more precisely, sudden awakening, in Chan. Following the historical footsteps of Chan monks westwards, the dissertation delves into the development and teachings of sTon mun,[7] the "Sudden School" in Tibet, which resulted from the interactions between Chinese Chan monks and Tibetan Mahāyoga and/or proto-Dzogchen practitioners of the

[7] sTon mun is a Tibetan transliteration of Chinese term *dunman* 頓門, literally meaning "sudden gate" or "sudden school." For its development in Tibet, see Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

8^{th}-10^{th} centuries. It then concludes this historical tracing of the logic of immediacy in contemplation with the early teachings of Dzogchen emphasizing primordial perfection and spontaneous presence.

This narrative strategy is to illustrate the variations of the logic of immediacy in contemplation through different case studies. It also tries to show the complex historical trajectories of these variations and the way the contemplative participants, Chinese and Tibetan, shaped them independently and/or in conversation. What is meant to be conveyed via this strategy is that the logic of immediacy in contemplation is not an isolated phenomenon. It had emerged, and thus can emerge, with different emphases in different times and places. Even though in our study the contemplatives had contact with each other, it would be hasty to conclude that there occurred a transplant of ideas. Rather, a more probable case is that the different variations of the logic of immediacy, due to their contemplative homogeneity and validity as acknowledged by their practitioners, came to reinforce one another so as to facilitate the long lasting effect in their respective traditions. This understanding, I would argue, further attests to the significance of the proposed 'im-mediate' knowing that embodies one's being, or put simply, being and knowing in wholeness, as a serious alternative to the onto-theo-centric solution(s) to one's existential meaning for religious studies.

B. Immediacy, Nonduality, and Contemplative Practice

Yet, generally speaking, the kind of nondual dynamic within the unified matrix of reality, which immediacy implies, constitutes a conundrum from the perspective of logic. For, as a nonconceptual state, the experience of nonduality is inexpressible even in words, not to mention in logic or reasoning; yet this understanding does not prevent practitioners

from relying on words or reasoning to realize that nondual experience.[8] The question is then: How can distinct elements like being and knowing, form and non-form, or the finite and the infinite remain differentiable while having the same essence (Ch. *yixing* 一性; Tib. *ngo bo gcig*), or put another way, be neither many nor one, logically speaking? How can opposites or contradictions, which, though they are conceptually incompatible, exist in a harmonious, albeit paradoxical, state? Various philosophies and religious teachings have been proposed to understand this paradoxically harmonious reality. For example, monistic perspectives generally resolve this logical paradox by identifying all opposites and overcoming all contradictions metaphysically, namely, collapsing them into a Universal Oneness (*e.g.*, Plotinus's idea of "The One") or Infinite God (*e.g.*, Nicholas of Cusa's "coincidence of opposites"). Unlike this metaphysical solution, nondual worldviews, particularly Buddhist teachings, provide different understandings to different oppositional categories. In her *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen*, Anne C. Klein identifies three non-oppositional dyads from Buddhist philosophical discourses.[9] She calls them ontological nondualism, cognitive nondualism, and evolutionary nondualism, referring to, respectively, the relationship between the ultimate and the conventional, between the subject and the object, and between one's present unenlightened state and future enlightened state.

Regarding monistic and nondual principles, David Loy understands monism as an ontological claim and nonduality as an epistemological description that an awakened

[8] In her *Knowledge and Liberation*, regarding the inexpressibility of the ultimate reality which is nondual, Anne C. Klein writes, "Since the inexpressibility of the ultimate is said to refer to the inability of words to convey a yogi's non-dualistic perception of ultimate reality as it is experienced, there is no contradiction in words and thought leading to that experience" (14). For a detailed discussion on the relation between reasoning/conceptual thinking and nondual experience from the Tibetan tradition of Gelukba, see Klein, *Knowledge and Liberation*. For a more general discussion on the relation between nonduality and thinking, see, Loy, *Nonduality*, 133-177.

[9] Klein, *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen*, 151-158.

being experiences.[10] Nevertheless, Klein's three types of nondualism strongly suggest that Buddhist nonduality consists of both ontological and epistemological aspects. In particular, ontological nondualism evidently depicts an ontologically nondual relationship between the ultimate *śūnyatā* (or emptiness in the Buddhist sense) and the conventional appearances. On the other hand, cognitive nondualism and evolutionary nondualism involve one's subjective recognition of the nondual states even though underneath both is the ontological nondualism. In this way, the three types of Buddhist nondualism not only can be integrated as a whole, but also must be realized with epistemological insights. As a result, in addition to reasoning that can establish the necessary conceptual foundation, Buddhist masters have all instructed that one must practice in contemplation to attain the nondual states.[11]

Among the contemplative practices, there are methods that employ mediation or gradual steps, but there are also traditions, such as Chan, sTon mun, and Dzogchen, which insist that immediacy is the key. Thus, they have developed unique language or rhetoric whose purpose is to bring forth the epistemological realization of the nondual states in the most direct manner possible, and at the same time to recognize the inartificial, or natural, character of the path. So, their rhetoric of directness and naturalness, the kinds of language, syntax, and categories of analysis by which meditative principles associated with sudden awakening and spontaneous presence are communicated, are themselves significant both for their religious identities and for carrying out their contemplative

[10] Loy, "The Lack of Ethics and the Ethics of Lack in Buddhism," 268.

[11] It is a contentious issue regarding the use of logic or reasoning in the realization of Buddhist awakening. Some Buddhist traditions like the Madhyamaka consider the training of logic/reasoning essential to the path, whereas some traditions like Chan and Dzogchen consider logic/reasoning at best limiting, if not damaging, the path to awakening. For a discussion on the use of logic/reasoning in Tibetan Buddhism, see, *e.g.*, Klein, *Knowledge and Liberation.* See also Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, Ruegg, *Buddha-nature, Mind and the Problem of Gradualism in a Comparative Perspective*, and Jackson, *Enlightenment by a Single Means.*

projects. It is to analyze these elements of the rhetoric doctrinally and contemplatively that I delve into the developments and teachings of Chan, sTon mun, and Dzogchen to understand the logic of immediacy.

C. The Philosophical and Contemplative Import Underlying the Logic of Immediacy

In exploring the contemplative structures underlying their rhetoric of directness and naturalness, I will demonstrate that the sudden teaching of Shenhui 神會 (684-758), the initiator of the debates between the Northern and the Southern Sects in Chan, is meant to guide his students to manifest the awakened mind in sympathetic resonance with the "equal learning" (Ch. *dengxue* 等學) of *samādhi*-being (or the state of deep concentration) and *prajñā*-knowing (or the wisdom of Buddhist emptiness) that artfully integrates gradualness into the context of suddenness (see Chapter 2). Moheyan 摩訶衍 (c. 8th-9th centuries), regarded as the representative of sTon mun, the Chan tradition in Tibet, on the other hand, teaches his disciples to directly access, with their spontaneous self-awareness, the mind-source (Ch. *xinyuan* 心源) in the simultaneous embrace of the conventional and the ultimate (see Chapter 4). Finally, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes (c. 832-943), probably the first Nyingma master historically known to us to systematically present the Dzogchen teachings, instructs practitioners to experience the "great wholeness" (Tib. *thig le chen po*), the reality of all being in its totality and myriad diversity, in the spontaneous presence of their reflexively open awareness, an "artful endeavor" that requires the practitioners' *skillful effort* done in accord with the principle of spontaneity (see Chapter 5). Together, these contemplative structures convey the message that the logic of immediacy does not reject *nominal intermediaries*. Rather, it

employs these so-called "intermediary tools" such as gradual cultivation, conventional means, and skillful effort in specific ways so that immediacy is realized without the dualistic bondages and conceptual limitations implied in their original contexts, *i.e.*, the contexts of gradualness, conventionality, and effort. Fundamentally, in the logic of immediacy, nothing of (or in) one's knowing is intermediary if one does not make it so; it is *how* "a tool" is employed rather than *what* it appears as that truly defines what it is.

Not only will my investigation demonstrate the contemplative structures underlying the respective teachings of suddenness and spontaneity, but I will also show that these teachings contemplatively take the goal of the path as the practice. This idea of taking the goal as the path is how the great Tibetan contemplative and doxographer, Klong chen pa (1308-1364), defines a *fruitional vehicle* (Ch. *guosheng* 果乘; Tib. *'bras bu'i theg pa*).[12] In Indo-Tibetan Buddhist discourses, a tradition or vehicle (Skt. *yāna*; Ch. *sheng* 乘; Tib. *theg pa*) derived from the sūtra, or a sūtric tradition or vehicle, is always characterized as a *causal vehicle* (Ch. *yinsheng* 因乘; Tib. *rgyu'i theg pa*), whereas a tantric tradition or vehicle is considered a fruitional vehicle.[13] Generally speaking, in Buddhist tantric discourses, a fruitional vehicle that recognizes one's primordial perfection and directly aims at that consummation is considered more effective, in time and in fruition, than a causal vehicle that relies on gradual development to achieve one's spiritual maturity.

The questions however are: Are all sūtric vehicles only causal? Or do we need better understandings regarding their contemplative nature individually to make such a strong conclusion? More significantly, if one only considers sūtric traditions causal without

[12] For a discussion on the meanings of "vehicle" in Buddhist context, see, *e.g.*, Jeffrey Hopkins's introduction to Dalai Lama's *Kālachakra Tantra: Rite of Initiation*, 24.

[13] See, *e.g.*, Longchen Rabjam, *The Precious Treasure of Philosophical Systems* (translated by Richard Barron), 127-260; Duckworth, *Mipam on Buddha-Nature*, 131-138; and Sobisch, *Three-Vow Theories in Tibetan Buddhism*, 367-369 and footnote 771.

further analysis, is it possible that one may misinterpret the contemplative significance of sūtric traditions, especially those having similar characteristics as a fruitional vehicle? To better address these questions, based on the three doctrinal systems aforementioned, I will demonstrate that Chan, sTon mun, and Dzogchen are all fruitional vehicles embodying the logic of immediacy in contemplation with different emphases, even though the former two are considered sūtric traditions, whereas the last one is a tantric tradition. As a result, it facilitates the understanding of the similarities among the three traditions and gives us a more delicate treatment on the use of causal and fruitional vehicles as categories of analysis for Buddhist studies.

To add to Deutsch's "knowing religiously," I will also show that the contemplative structures of the three fruitional traditions under investigation all characterize the logic of immediacy in contemplation as a holistic dynamic between being and knowing, a kind of "mutual interfusion" between ontology and epistemology. This "mutual interfusion" essentially integrates the above three types of Buddhist nondualism in Klein's typology into a wholeness that embraces the various facets of nonduality in their suchness. Thus, this embracing wholeness depicts a holography of nondual relationships with respect to objects, between self and other, and between one's present self and future ideal. Yet, these nondual relationships, I argue, are all embodied in the nondual dynamic of one's ontology and epistemology, in which being and knowing are wholly integrated; *being knows*, and *knowing is.* In this ultimate relationship of ontology and epistemology, all opposites and contradictions are resolved in a unique manner of knowing, in which the spontaneous presence of one's original awareness or open awareness is the ultimate being. In this way, there can be no "abstract truth" divorced from one's subjective engagement,

yet as this original/open awareness, these traditions unequivocally state, resonates with the suchness of reality, it will therefore not lead to cultural or moral relativism.[14]

To be sure, scholars have questioned the efficacy of the idea of immediacy for contemplation. For example, in the case of Chan, Bernard Faure and T. Griffith Foulk have argued that its subitism, or the doctrine of sudden awakening, is "less ... a depiction of concrete practice and more ... an effort to distinguish Ch'an from other schools."[15] That is to say, for these scholars, not only does the Chan idea of immediacy lack contemplative significance, but it is also sectarian, *i.e.*, a rhetoric which seeks "to win prestige and adherents [for the Chan Sect] within the *sangha* and to gain notice and patronage from the state and lay elite."[16] In addition to this sectarian issue, other authors have argued, out of ethical concerns, that the idea of immediacy, especially in the form of spontaneity, is problematic, and can give rise to laxity as well as antinomian behaviors disguised as spontaneous actions.[17]

Nonetheless, my study will show that while the contemplative teachings centered on the principle of the fruitional vehicle all acknowledge the manifestation of an effortless quality, a spontaneous aroma, this effortlessness, usually realized through a set of *via negativa* or "negative paths,"[18] is not meant to be inactive, antinomian, or to negate something logically (even though they might be abused or misunderstood as such).

[14] For discussions on issues related to cultural or moral relativism, see, *e.g.*, Norris, *Reclaiming Truth*; Hunt, *Beyond Relativism*; Levy, *Moral Relativism: A Short Introduction*; and Moser and Carson (eds), *Moral Relativism: A Reader*.

[15] Halperin, *Out of the Cloister*, 243 (footnote 25). For their arguments, see, *e.g.*, Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 53-78 and T. Griffith Foulk, "Myth, Ritual, and Monastic Practice in Sung Ch'an Buddhism," 147-208. Also, see Halperin, *Out of the Cloister*, 7-12 and Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 171-179.

[16] Halperin, *Out of the Cloister*, 243 (footnote 25).

[17] See, *e.g.*, Barnard and Kripal (eds), *Crossing Boundaries*; Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 59-63; and Stone, *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, 92-93; 218-228; 358-359.

[18] These "negative paths" include non-action, no-thought, non-conceptualization, non-grasping, non-examination, and non-abidance, to name just a few.

Rather, it is a special kind of contemplative effort Anne C. Klein and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche call "artful endeavor,"[19] through which one's original nature, particularly in the form of self-awareness, can spontaneously manifest itself, just as the sun naturally comes out of the clouds or a mirror always reflects brightly with its innate luminosity. It is with this spontaneous self-awareness that the contemplative teachings under investigation, I would say, echo the message of Deutsch's "knowing religiously," stressing religious knowledge as having a reverential knowing that is centered in reality and creatively transforms our ordinary knowledge with wonder, openness, insight, and love.

Such an understanding of what religious knowledge is distinctly brings out the significance underlying our investigation of the logic of immediacy in contemplation, for it highlights an alternative paradigm to understand religious knowledge. Rather than depending on an objectified or transcendental highest being, this alternative paradigm tells us that the meaning of one's being lies in one's unique manner of knowing, which, in our particular case, is a unique form of self-awareness, *i.e.*, one's spontaneous self-awareness or open awareness. Similar to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's "*question-knowing*, which by principle no statement or 'answer' can go beyond and which perhaps therefore is the proper mode of our relationship with Being, as though it were the mute or reticent interlocutor of our questions,"[20] this open awareness has "an original manner of aiming at something," for it inspires one to embrace all but reify none. With this non-reifying and all-embracing awareness, the proper mode of our relationship with Being is embodied in an open and dialogic dynamic, in which one unfolds one's being and

[19] See Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, 87-118.
[20] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* (translated by Alphonso Lingis), 129.

knowing in wholeness. It is this new relationship, *i.e.*, the relationship between being and knowing, that not only is the insight of our investigation of the logic of immediacy but also provides an additional paradigm through which we explore the nature of religious knowledge.

II. Historical Studies of Chan and Dzogchen: A Contemplative Perspective

In addition to the above philosophical and contemplative issues, to weave together the complex historical tapestries of how Chinese and Tibetan Buddhists shaped their ideas of immediacy within their broader socioreligious contexts, I will also present two historical studies from a perspective that highlights their contemplative concerns as these Chinese and Tibetan Buddhists developed their traditions. The first study, also the point of departure of the dissertation, is to show a historical grounding for the logic of immediacy in contemplation by tracing how the distinguishing features of Chan Buddhism, most notably, sudden awakening, emerged under the mutual influence of Chinese indigenous and imported foreign *dhyāna* or meditative teachings. As a point of connection, the second study deals with the historical interactions between Chinese Chan monks and Tibetan Mahāyoga or proto-Dzogchen practitioners at the borders of Tang-Song China and Tibet of the 8^{th}-10^{th} centuries. Not only do these studies provide the historical contexts that ground our discussion of the logic of immediacy in contemplation in time and space, they also have their own merits, for they provide an alternative interpretation to, and even a necessary extension of, historical studies done only from the sociopolitical perspective that may overlook the spiritual or religious efficacy in the development of a religious tradition.

As a preparation for our studies, below, I will introduce some background materials

and the methodology used. As my tracing of the development of Chan Buddhism will be self-explanatory (in Chapter 1), I will thus give an overview of the three perspectives regarding the relationship between Chan and Dzogchen to contextualize our discussion of the development and teachings of sTon mun (in Chapters 3 and 4). Inspired by these perspectives, I will then introduce the categories of the disseminator and the recipient to discuss the development of a religious tradition. My particular interest is to highlight how certain recipients incorporate new teachings and/or practices with special concerns to the contemplative project of their tradition. Even though these recipients may later become the disseminators, since their contemplative concerns have already shaped their tradition, it would still be significant to focus on how these early recipients shape the contemplative elements of their tradition. This methodology is what I call the contemplative perspective that will be applied to the two historical studies outlined above.

A. Three Perspectives on the Relationship between Chan and Dzogchen

Owing to the newly discovered Dunhuang manuscripts at the turn of the 20th century in Northwest China, the interactions between Chinese Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism in general and Chan and Dzogchen in particular have received considerable academic attention in recent years. Since Tibetan Buddhism was in its early formation during the 8th-10th centuries, modern scholars have mostly studied the subjects in terms of how Chinese disseminators and/or teachings shaped the Tibetan traditions.

Thematically, the topics of related scholarly research generally include the following: (1) the development and teachings of Tibetan Chan, referred to as sTon mun (*i.e.*, the

Sudden School) or Cig car ba (*i.e.*, the Simultaneists) by scholars,[21] (2) the syncretic interactions between Chan and Tantra in Dunhuang,[22] and (3) the historical and doctrinal relationships between Chan and Dzogchen.[23] These topics essentially are intertwined, because sTon mun, a descendant of Chan, eventually disappeared in Tibet and its disappearance coincided with the emergence of Dzogchen, which has led some scholars (such as Giuseppe Tucci and Ueyama Daishun)[24] to suggest that Dzogchen was, at least in part, a re-contextualized form of Chan/sTon mun. Thus, I will focus on the relationship between Chan and Dzogchen to review the new findings pertaining to our subject matter.

In general, regarding the relationship between Chan and Dzogchen of the 8th-10th centuries, there exist three major perspectives among modern scholars. The first basically states that Chan had a direct influence on Dzogchen, especially in terms of its teachings on the mind-nature (Ch. *xinxing* 心性) and the instantaneous nature of awakening. For

[21] See *e.g.*, Demiéville, *Le Concile de Lhasa*; Obata, "Kodai chibetto ni okeru tonmonpa (zenshū) no nagare 古代チベットにおける頓門派(禅宗)の流れ (The Development of the Sudden School (Zen School) in Ancient Tibet)"; Okimoto, "Tonkō shutsudo no chibetto bun zenshū bunken no naiyō 敦煌出土のチベット文禅宗文献の内容 (The Contents of Tibetan Chan Literature Recovered from Dunhuang)"; Kimura, "Tonkō shutsudo no chibetto bun zenshū bunken no seikaku 敦煌出土のチベット文禅宗文献の性格 (The Characteristics of Tibetan Chan Literature Recovered from Dunhuang)"; Kimura, "Tonkō shutsudo chibetto-bun shahon Stein 709 敦煌出土チベット文写本 Stein 709 (The Dunhuang Tibetan Manuscript Stein 709)"; Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 86-106; Broughton, "Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet"; Gómez, "The Direct and the Gradual Approaches of Zen Master Mahayana: Fragments of the teachings of Mo-ho-yen"; Faber, "A Tibetan Dunhuang Treatise on Simultaneous Enlightenment: The *dMyigs su myed pa tshul gcig pa'i gzhung*"; Otokawa, "New Fragments of the *rNal 'byor chen por bsgom pa'i don* from Tabo;" and Ueyama, "The Study of Tibetan Chan Manuscripts Recovered from Tun-huang: A Review of the Field and its Prospects."

[22] See *e.g.*, Meinert, "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs chen*: Preliminary Remarks on Two Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts" and van Schaik and Dalton, "Where Chan and Tantra Meet: Tibetan Syncretism in Dunhuang."

[23] See *e.g.*, Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts: Part II*; Barber, "The Unifying of rDzogs-pa chen-po and Ch'an"; Tanaka and Robertson, "A Ch'an Text from Tun-huang: Implications for Ch'an Influence on Tibetan Buddhism"; Guenther, "'Meditation' Trends in Early Tibet"; Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 86-103, 216; Germano, "Architecture and Absence in the Secret Tantric History of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*)," 217; and Norbu, *Dzog Chen and Zen*.

[24] Not only modern scholars but also early Tibetan Buddhists have proposed similar ideas. According to Samten Karmay, these early Tibetan Buddhists include "certain segments of the Tibetan Buddhist orthodoxy, from the king of mNga'-ris, lHa Bla-ma Ye-shes-'od, to the Sa skya pa and the dGe lugs pa" (Karmey, *The Great Perfection*, 89). For Sa-skya Paṇḍita's argument, see Jackson, *Enlightenment by a Single Means*, 72-78; 91-121.

example, in his *Minor Buddhist Texts: Part II*, Giuseppe Tucci forcefully argues that Dzogchen had a genetic relationship to Chan. Delving into the famous Council of Tibet (c. 792-794)[25] and Nyingma texts such as the *Blon po bka'i thang yig* (*The Chronicle of Ministers*) section of the *bKa' thang sde lnga* (*The Five Chronicles*), Tucci finds Dzogchen's doctrines of the pure mind and its instantaneous nature of awakening to exhibit a close affinity with their parallel elements in Chan. He thus concludes that Dzogchen accepted and preserved these Chan ideas after their alleged expurgation, which

25 Various studies on the issues surrounding this famous Sino-Indian Buddhist controversy culminating in the debate or debates in the Samye monastery have emerged in the last couple of decades. Many aspects of this historical event have been clarified by two pioneering works, namely, Paul Demiéville's *Le Concile de Lhasa* (1952) and Giuseppe Tucci's *Minor Buddhist Texts: Part II* (1958); other works include Houston, *Sources for a History of the bSam yas Debate*; Pachow, "A Study of the Twenty-Two Dialogues on Mahāyāna Buddhism"; Imaeda, "Documents tibétains de Touen-houang concernant le concile du Tibet"; Yanagida, "The *Li-tai fa-pao* chi and the Ch'an Doctrine of Sudden Awakening;" Gómez, "Indian Materials on the Doctrine of Sudden Enlightenment"; and also the bibliography therein.

There have been different theories proposed and it seems that many historians have inclined to the theory that there was probably more than one debate held in the Samye monastery over a period of several years. According to Demiéville, the debate took place from 792 to 794 CE, but Pachow argues that there is strong evidence to indicate that the debate took place in 781 or between the years of 780 to 782 CE (Pachow, "A Study of the Twenty-Two Dialogues on Mahāyāna Buddhism," 39). Regarding the issue of who actually won the debate, Tibetan Buddhist historians have uniformly claimed that the Chinese representative was roundly defeated and that the king issued a decree confirming the superiority of Indian Buddhism and urging Tibetan Buddhists to follow the teachings of the Madhyamaka School (Wangdu and Diemberger (trans), *dBa' bzhed*, 79-89; Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 4-5). However, among modern historians, it is still an unsettled issue; according to Demiéville, Chinese accounts of the controversy clearly indicate that Moheyan won the debate and was authorized to stay in Tibet to continue his teaching (Demiéville, *Le Concile de Lhasa*, 42, 170) and D. Ueyama has proposed that Moheyan won a debate with Śāntarakṣita in writing but later was defeated by Kamalaśīla and then banished to China (see Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, footnote 9 on page 87).

Regarding other issues related to the debate, see also Wayman, "Doctrinal Disputes and the Debate of bSam yas"; Roccasalvo, "The Debate at bSam yas: Religious Contrast and Correspondence"; R. Jackson, "Sa skya paṇḍita's Account of the bSam yas Debate: History as Polemic"; van der Kuijp, "On the Sources for Sa skya Paṇḍita's Notes on the Bsam yas Debate" and "Miscellanea to a Recent Contribution on/to the bSam-yas Debate"; Faber, "The Council of Tibet according to the *sBa bzhed*"; Broido, "Sa-skya Paṇḍita, the White Panacea and the Hva-Shang Doctrine"; Ruegg, *Buddha-nature, Mind and the Problem of Gradualism in a Comparative Perspective*, 63-92 and "On the Tibetan Historiography and Doxography of the 'Great Debate of bSam yas'"; D. Jackson, "Sa-skya Paṇḍita the 'Polemicist': Ancient Debates and Modern Interpretations" and "Birds in the Egg and Newborn Lion Cubs: Metaphors for the Potentialities and Limitations of 'All-at-once' Enlightenment"; D. Jackson, *Enlightenment by a Single Means*; Sven Bretfeld, "The 'Great Debate' of bSam yas: Construction and Deconstruction of a Tibetan Buddhist Myth"; Huang and Liu, "Sangye lunzheng zhong de 'dasheng heshang jian': 'Dunru' shuo de kaocha 桑耶論諍中的「大乘和尚見」:「頓入」說的考察 ('The View of Heshang Mahāyāna' in the Debate of bSam yas: An Investigation of the 'Sudden Entrance' Teaching)."; and Shen, "Xizangwen wenxian zhong de Heshang Moheyan ji qi jiaofa: Yige chuangzao chulai de chuantong 西藏文文獻中的和尚摩訶衍及其教法: 一個創造出來的傳統 (*Hva shang* Mahāyāna and His Teaching in Tibetan Literature: An Invented Tradition).

Tibetan historians claimed to have happened after the Council of Tibet.[26]

The second perspective basically states that while they both could trace a shared heritage back to Indian Buddhism, Chan and Dzogchen were innovatively developed by the Chinese and the Tibetans in their respective socioreligious contexts. Therefore, these traditions should be studied independently. In various degrees, scholars who hold this view have all criticized Tucci's claim to be inconclusive and even faulty primarily on two accounts. First, they argue that the ideas that Tucci found in Dzogchen and identified as inherited from Chan could actually come from Indian Buddhism, namely, the *siddha* movement. For these scholars, there is simply no sufficient evidence to conclude what Tucci concluded. Secondly, they challenge the reliability and even the authenticity of the text, *i.e.*, the *Blon po bka'i thang yig*, from which Tucci derived his conclusions. Based on Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts and early Nyingma texts such as the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (*The Lamp for the Eye of Dhyāna*), they argue that sTon mun, the Chan tradition in Tibet, had been considered a distinct vehicle from Dzogchen even in the formative period of Dzogchen identity. As a result, they should be treated as different vehicles.[27]

Generally, the third perspective presents a more complicated picture regarding the relationship between Chan and Dzogchen. David Germano points out that while Tucci's claim may be insufficiently demonstrated and Dzogchen further came to be "tantricized" in the later spread of Tibetan Buddhism,[28] historical evidence does support that early

[26] For his detailed argument, see Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts: Part II*, 60-68. Those who have similar views to Tucci's include Ueyama Daishun, Jeffrey Broughton, and A. W. Barber; see Ueyama, "Chibetto-yaku *Tongo shinshū yōketsu* no kenkyū チベット訳『頓悟真宗要決』の研究 (A Study of the Tibetan Version of Tunwu chên tsung yao chüeh)"; Broughton, "Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet"; and Barber, "The Unifying of rDzogs-pa chen-po and Ch'an."

[27] For more detailed arguments, see, *e.g.*, Kvaerne, "'The Great Perfection' in the Tradition of the Bonpos," 384-385; Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 86-106; Tanaka and Robertson, "A Ch'an Text from Tun-huang: Implications for Ch'an Influence on Tibetan Buddhism," 71-78.

[28] For a more detailed discussion on the "tantricized" development of Dzogchen, see, *e.g.*, Germano, "The

Dzogchen could have been directly influenced by Chan teachings. Particularly, he argues that the influence might have happened outside of Tibetan cultural domains, *e.g.*, at the border area of Dunhuang, and/or in the years before sTon mun and Dzogchen were recognized as distinct vehicles in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*. As a result, Germano writes, "Given their striking similarities as well as the references to Chan in Nyingma literature, it would be very odd if the Great Perfection [*i.e.*, Dzogchen] was not significantly influenced by its dialogues with Chan, even if its original genesis and primary impetus is to be located elsewhere."[29]

As a matter of fact, recent studies using Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts have confirmed that early Tibetan Buddhists did syncretically integrate Chan ideas with proto-Dzogchen and/or Mahāyoga tantric teachings. Following the footsteps of her Japanese predecessors, Carmen Meinert identifies two Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts, *i.e.*, the *Lung chung* (or *Small Treatise*) in ITJ 689 (two folios) and the commentary in PT 699 (five folios),[30] as a Tibetan commentary on the *Lung chung*, a Chan treatise expounding the nature of mind. In her research, she demonstrates that the commentary in PT 699 presents a unique Tibetan interpretation of Chan teachings, in which Tibetan commentator(s) took ideas from other Tibetan traditions, specifically the "not-yet-systemized" Dzogchen, to elucidate the Chan doctrine of mind-nature as well as its

Funerary Transformation of the Great Perfection (*Rdzogs chen*)."

[29] Germano, "Architecture and Absence in the Secret Tantric History of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*)," 217.

[30] Since most of the Dunhuang manuscripts either do not have titles or consist of collections of several texts or are fragmentary, these manuscripts are usually identified with their catalogue numbers. Most of the Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts are collected in the Pelliot collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and in the Stein collection in the British Library in London. I have followed Sam van Schaik's convention to denote the former PT and the latter ITJ. Thus, PT 699 refers to Item 699 in the Pelliot collection, whereas ITJ 689 refers to Item 689 in the Stein collection. As a note, over the years scholars have preferred to refer to the manuscripts in the Stein collection with the prefix "Stein Tibetan" or ST. But as these manuscripts all have the prefix *IOL Tib J.*, I thus follow Schaik's convention (van Schaik, "The Early Days of the Great Perfection," 166 and footnote 2 therein).

corresponding contemplative practice. As a result, they created a syncretic teaching between Chinese Chan and Tibetan Dzogchen.[31]

Rejecting Carmen Meinert's reading of the commentary in PT 699 as a Dzogchen interpretation of the *Lung chung* given in ITJ 689, Sam van Schaik and Jacob Dalton contend that the commentary in PT 699 should be better understood as a Mahāyoga tantric commentary on the Chan teachings of the *Lung chung*, especially when taking into consideration the same author's works given in the Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts PT 626 and PT 634. Having analyzed a group of five Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts, van Schaik and Dalton conclude that the philological and doctrinal similarities of these manuscripts are significant enough to convince them that these manuscripts were composed by the same author. Hence, when taking the Mahāyoga tantric elements, particularly the three *samādhi*s in the development stage (Skt. *utpattikrama*; Tib. *bskyed rim*), clearly emphasized in the other manuscripts, van Schaik and Dalton insist that the commentary in PT 699 undoubtedly presents an interpretation of "a Chan text in terms of Mahāyoga ritual techniques."[32]

B. Methodology: A Perspective Sensitive to the Concerns of the Contemplative

Given the above three perspectives, we know that Chan teachings were being circulated among early Tibetan Buddhists. And, more importantly, it seems that whether Chan teachings were syncretically integrated with the "not-yet-systemized" Dzogchen, or with the Mahāyoga tantra, it is clear that in either case Tibetan Buddhists, the recipients, rather than Chan masters, the disseminators, were the ones who created the innovative

[31] For her detailed argument, see Meinert, "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs chen*: Preliminary Remarks on Two Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts."
[32] Van Schaik and Dalton, "Where Chan and Tantra Meet: Tibetan Syncretism in Dunhuang," 68.

assimilation within their broader tantric context. This understanding effectively tells us that there could be a "recipient's perspective" in terms of looking at the development of a religious system or tradition.

Now, the questions are: What can we learn from this recipient's perspective? Is there really a need to create the two categories of the recipient and the disseminator in terms of understanding the development of a religious tradition? Can we really separate them in the process? Put another way, aren't the recipient and the disseminator working together in shaping the development? More importantly, how does the recipient's perspective help our two historical studies, namely, tracing the evolution of the distinguishing features of Chan Buddhism and investigating the interactions between Chan monks and Tibetan tantric practitioners?

As two categories, the disseminator and the recipient could have different concerns. Generally speaking, in the beginning of a tradition's formation, as the disseminators aim at spreading their teachings, they would focus more on how to communicate their ideas, pay more attention to legitimacy, and thus have a more sectarian consciousness. On the other hand, as the recipients try to figure out what it is exactly that they are receiving, they would focus more on how to apply the ideas to practice, care more about the contemplative effectiveness of the teachings, and thus be more willing to go beyond sectarian boundary so as to integrate as many insights from similar teachings as possible. Put simply, the disseminators would be more doctrinal, authoritative, and sectarian, whereas the recipients would be more practical, inclusive, and less sectarian-oriented.

To be sure, the above characterizations of the disseminator and the recipient are not absolute. This is not only because in reality it is very possible for a practitioner to play

the roles of the disseminator and the recipient simultaneously and/or under different scenarios, but also because there exist different subsets within each group. That is to say, not only can a practitioner be a disseminator, a recipient, or a combination of the two, but he or she can also be a paṇḍita or doctrinally oriented scholar, a contemplative or practically oriented yogi, or a combination of the two. Thus, the line that separates the disseminators and the recipients is moving and flexible, a fact that will be evident in our historical narratives. However, since their concerns do highlight different messages, both in terms of content and methodology, I would argue that it is still useful to treat them as different categories and apply them to the exploration of religious development.

Content-wise, the aforementioned recipient characteristics would be even more prominent if the recipients are also the contemplatives, for these contemplative recipients, due to their special interest in practice, would incorporate new ideas with unique concerns to the contemplative project of their tradition. Even though the recipients may later become the disseminators, since their contemplative concerns have been taken into consideration to shape their tradition in its formative period, these unique concerns, arguably, would be significant and even carried further into the later development of the tradition. It is with this understanding that the contemplative perspective that derives from the contemplative recipients, I believe, can offer a vantage point to better illuminate the subjects of our historical studies, *i.e.*, the contemplative elements embedded in the distinguishing features of Chan teachings and the contemplative similarities and/or differences between the teachings and practices of Chan/sTon mun and Dzogchen.

Methodologically, different perspectives, in effect, present different "attitudes" as to understanding, in our case, the development of a religious tradition. Since the "attitude"

of the contemplative recipients is usually more practical and less sectarian-oriented than that of others, religious traditions stressing hands-on practices and exhibiting syncretic elements like our subjects, Chan in China and sTon mun in Tibet, would be ideal candidates for examination from such a perspective. In addition, because this recipient's perspective is more sensitive to the contemplative concerns of the participants that shape the spiritual elements of their tradition, I believe, it would offer an alternative angle or interpretation to, and even a necessary extension of, studies performed only from the sociopolitical perspective, which, without concerning spiritual or religious efficacy, may one-sidedly[33] characterize the development of a religious tradition like Chan only as "the outcome of the 'will to orthodoxy.'"[34] As demonstrated later, when the concerns of the contemplatives are taken into account, the development of a religious tradition, such as the emergence of Chan in developmental negotiations (Chapter 1) and the disappearance of sTon mun in syncretic assimilation (Chapter 3), is not just a religious sect rising or falling in power, but religious participants seeking their presence through the means of negotiation and assimilation. This understanding effectively helps us to include as well as extend our reach beyond the polemic, the sectarian, and the historical so that not only can we better appreciate the spiritual nuances of teachings under investigation, but we will better recognize the values of various changes the historical movement of a religious tradition (*e.g.*, rising or falling in power) may yield.

[33] Certainly, I am not suggesting that studies done from the sociopolitical perspective are all one-sided. Rather, I am suggesting that even studies done with particular emphasis on the sociopolitical agenda of the religious participants should also take their spiritual or religious concerns into account, for religious practitioners, after all, are religiously oriented even though they do usually have sociopolitical agenda as well. Given this understanding, an ideal case would be to include as many insights from various perspectives as possible and bring these insights into a dialogue with each other so that a tapestry with vibrant and diverse patterns/details can be discovered.

[34] Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 4.

III. A Brief Summary of the Dissertation

It should be thus clear that this dissertation discusses philosophical, contemplative, religious, and historical issues in the exploration of the idea of immediacy based on the teachings of Chan, sTon mun, and Dzogchen. As its narration follows a historical trajectory, I therefore divide the main contents of the dissertation into two parts, starting with an origin narrative and an exemplar of the idea of immediacy based on the teachings of Chinese Chan, and continuing with an encounter narrative and variations of the idea of immediacy based on the teachings of sTon mun and Tibetan Dzogchen. In the end of the narration, I then offer some conclusions and final thoughts to complete the journey. As a note, all translations of the primary materials in the dissertation, Chinese and Tibetan, are my own unless otherwise indicated.

A. An Origin Narrative and an Exemplar of the Logic of Immediacy: The Case of Chinese Chan

As a historical grounding for our investigation of the logic of immediacy, Part I begins with an origin narrative that addresses the question of how the idea of immediacy emerges over time. Setting out to find the distinguishing features of Chan Buddhism that underscore the significance of immediacy for contemplation, especially in the forms of suddenness and spontaneity, Chapter 1, "**How *Chan* Became Chan**," presents a historical study that discusses how *chan*, as meditative teachings or practices to develop *samādhi* (or deep concentration), became Chan, a school known to the later generations as the tradition of sudden awakening.[35] I do so by tracing the evolution of early Chinese

[35] More specifically, it is usually said that Chan is "a special transmission outside the scriptures; not dependent upon words and speech, [it] directly points at the mind [so that one] sees into one's nature and attain Buddhahood (教外別傳，不立文字，直指人心，見性成佛)."

dhyāna teachings recorded in the biographies of *chan* or *dhyāna* monks (Ch. *chanseng* 禪僧), and argue that when early Chinese *dhyāna* monks conceptually and practically brought *chan* out of the traditional Buddhist context of the Three Studies,[36] they, with that very act, set *chan* onto the path of becoming Chan.

This transformation, I will demonstrate, was inspired by a mutual development between Chinese *dhyāna* monks' understanding of original or innate awakening (Ch. *benjue* 本覺) and the mind-nature teaching of Bodhidharma 菩提達摩 (d. 536?). Eventually, this mutual development between the local and foreign *chan* teachings gave rise to the formation of Chan Buddhism. In the formation, I will also demonstrate, due to their contemplative concerns, Chan adepts developed the three distinguishing features that essentially characterize the teachings and practices of Chan as the special mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures, the tradition of sudden awakening via the direct seeing of one's true nature.

To probe into the meaning of this origin narrative of Chan Buddhism seen from the contemplative perspective, I reflect upon the question of searching for a "pure" practice to realize a "pure" Chan. As my narrative is intentionally sensitive to the contemplative concerns of the practitioners, I contend that their pursuit for a "pure" Chan was neither to establish a doctrinal system or a school that is "uncontaminated by its relationship to history";[37] nor an endeavor trying to bring back an idealized past or to bring forth a transcendent realm. Rather, it was to a significant degree a path of negotiations, on which Chan practitioners were trying different ways to mediate the tensions caused by the

[36] The Three Studies are (1) *śīla* or observance of the precepts, (2) *samādhi* or deep concentration, and (3) *prajñā* or wisdom.
[37] Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 182.

differences among themselves and/or between traditional Buddhist views and their innovative teachings.

As a spiritual exercise, the goal of such mediation was aiming at developing a unique style of self-awareness so that the practitioners could enjoy freedom without stagnation or bondage and at the same time act according to their socioreligious conditions. In this way, the origin narrative of Chan development, informed by the contemplative concerns of the participants, not only demonstrates how the logic of immediacy in contemplation came to being in Chan (thus grounding the idea of immediacy in history), but also provides an alternative reading to historical studies performed from the sociopolitical perspective that has dominated the field.

As an exemplar of how to put the idea of immediacy to practice, Chapter 2, "**Sympathetic Resonance and 'Equal Learning'**," delves into the sudden teaching of Shenhui, the Chan master who "first championed the doctrine of sudden enlightenment,"[38] and explores its underlying contemplative structure. Based on Shenhui's oral and written teachings given in three Dunhuang Chinese manuscripts, I will show that, due to his uncompromising insistence on the *unconditional* (Ch. *fei yuanqi* 非緣起) and *ubiquitous* (Ch. *bian yiqie chu* 遍一切處) nature of one's awakened mind, Shenhui advocates his sudden teaching which, instead of using dialectical approaches, employs the sympathetic resonance of *wunian* 無念 or "no-thought" to lead the practitioner to spontaneously realize the holistic being of the awakened mind.

Yet, this sudden teaching of Shenhui's is more complicated than it appears, for it entails, I will demonstrate, a unique integration of sudden awakening and gradual

[38] McRae, "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism," 231.

cultivation. Effectively, this unique integration demonstrates that not only must the logic of immediacy in contemplation paradoxically involve gradualness, but it must integrate the gradualness in the context of suddenness so that the logic of immediacy can be artfully implemented without the dualistic or conceptual faults implied by the idea of gradualness. In addition, Shenhui's unique integration also gives rise to a practice that requires its practitioner to maintain a holistic state of awareness in the manner of "no-thought" while participating in all activities with the wise discernment of "original wisdom" (Ch. *benzhi* 本智). In this way, with a liberated state of mind, the practitioner acts according to his or her own specific conditions without being defined or imprisoned by them.

Further analysis shows that under the contemplative structure of Shenhui's sudden teaching lies a nondual dynamic, in which being and knowing are integrated into a wholeness that inextricably embraces the principles of nonduality and spontaneity. Shenhui explains this as the "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā*. Depicting a mutual interfusion and permeation of ontology and epistemology, this wholeness of *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing hermeneutically embodies Shenhui's suddenness in a practice of the fruitional vehicle. Thus, together with his integration of suddenness and gradualness, Shenhui's "equal learning," which implies a nondual, holistic dynamic of being and knowing, provides an essential piece of the puzzle for our project of understanding the mechanism underlying the logic of immediacy in contemplation.

B. *An Encounter Narrative and Variations of the Logic of Immediacy: The Cases of sTon mun and Tibetan Dzogchen*

Following the historical footsteps of Chan monks westwards, Part II begins with an

encounter narrative that depicts a "conversation" between practitioners of immediacy from different quarters of the religious-philosophizing spectrum. Specifically, Chapter 3, "**sTon mun as a Tradition of Encounter**," presents a historical narrative of connection which tries to find clues that may link Chan and Dzogchen. I do so by taking the contemplative recipient's perspective to investigate the syncretic development of sTon mun, a tradition resulting from the interactions between Chan monks and Tibetan tantric practitioners of the 8th-10th centuries. Based on certain Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts and early Nyingma texts,[39] I explore the syncretic development of sTon mun through a structural analysis of how early Tibetan Buddhists carried out their works of translation, compilation, and interpretation in relation to Chan teachings.

In the analysis, I will show that not only was sTon mun syncretic in nature, but that the Tibetan practitioners of sTon mun considered the contemplative teachings and practices of Chan and proto-Dzogchen compatible; in other words, they all follow the similar principles of suddenness and spontaneity. Consequently, trying to include as many insights from similar traditions as possible, these practitioners integrated the two teachings, which, on the one hand, created a unique syncretic integration and, on the other hand, led to the absorption of sTon mun, thus its disappearance, within the broader tantric milieu of Tibet. In the framework of Wilfred C. Smith's idea of a cumulative religious tradition,[40] the disappearance of sTon mun as an independent tradition in Tibet can thus be seen as a result of the continuous creation process of the Dzogchen tradition.

[39] The Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts used include Tibetan translations of Chan texts (*e.g.*, PT 116/8, PT 823/1, ITJ 710/2), compilations of Chan treatises (*e.g.*, PT 116 and ITJ 709), and original Tibetan compositions (*e.g.*, PT 116/5, PT 626, PT 634, PT 699, PT 818, and ITJ 709/9), whereas the early Nyingma texts referred include gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's *bSam gtan mig sgron* and Vimalamitra's *Cig car 'jug pa rnam par mi rtog pa'i bsgom don*. As noted above, various Dunhuang manuscripts are collections of several texts. So, PT 116/8 refers to the 8th text identified in the manuscript PT 116, PT 823/1 refers to the 1st text in the manuscript PT 823, etc.

[40] See Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion*, 139-153.

In effect, this understanding ironically makes the disappearance of sTon mun a possible link connecting Chan and Dzogchen historically and contemplatively. It also informs us that the specifics concerning the connection of religious traditions may be obtained through the disappearance of an associated tradition, especially under the condition when the traditions of encounter bear similar insights and practices, and the recipients are more concerned with realizing their contemplative or soteriological goal(s) rather than preserving sectarian boundaries. As a result, the contemplative recipient's perspective employed in our encounter narrative provides not only an alternative to but also an extension of the sociopolitical perspective usually taken in the field, for it deepens our appreciation of the philosophical and contemplative nuances of the associated traditions as well as helps us to go beyond the historical so that we can better recognize the values of changes in the historical movements of religious traditions. In our case, one unique value that can be inferred from the disappearance of sTon mun is that variations of the logic of immediacy in contemplation have been developed independently in different times and places.

Continuing the encounter narrative and introducing variations of the idea of immediacy, Chapter 4 entitled "**Oneness or Wholeness?**" examines the teachings of sTon mun. It explores the contemplative significance of simultaneity or simultaneous access (Tib. *cig car 'jug pa*) propounded by sTon mun and discusses two different understandings that, on the one hand, reveal the various philosophical and contemplative layers embedded in the idea of simultaneity and, on the other hand, illustrate the possibility of reading distinctively the idea of immediacy by practitioners of different philosophical or contemplative orientations.

The first rendition is given by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in his *bSam gtan mig sgron*. Basically, gNubs chen considers sTon mun *a causal vehicle* (Ch. *yinsheng* 因乘; Tib. *rgyu'i theg pa*) derived from the sūtras of definitive meaning (Tib. *nges don*) and interprets its sudden teaching as a direct access to the unborn ultimate without alternation (Tib. *re mos*). But this direct access without alternation (of sTon mun), for gNubs chen, is eventually a oneness or monism, for it collapses everything into one truth, namely, the ultimate truth. Thus, it is a mistaken understanding and misses the nonduality or inseparability of the ultimate and the conventional. In this way, the sTon mun suddenness without alternation ironically ends up in a conceptual alternation that separates in actuality what isn't separate. Here, gNubs chen's reading of the sTon mun suddenness or simultaneity significantly indicates that the logic of immediacy in contemplation, if misunderstood philosophically, can result in an incomplete cognition of reality at best, if not a distorted one.

In contrast to gNubs chen's rendition, I present an alternative understanding of the sTon mun simultaneity based on Dunhuang Chan manuscripts. I show that the simultaneity of sTon mun is actually an access to the all-encompassing mind-source (Ch. *xinyuan* 心源), which, though it contains both the two truths, is referred to as the "ultimate meaning" (Ch. *shengyi* 勝義; Tib. *don dam pa*) by Moheyan. I surmise that it was this ambiguous reference that led gNubs chen to interpret the simultaneity of sTon mun as a oneness. Thus, building upon this new understanding, I analyze the difference between oneness and the wholeness that derives from the sTon mun teaching of the all-encompassing mind-source and that gives rise to the sTon mun understanding of nonduality and spontaneity.

I further show that the all-encompassing wholeness of sTon mun simultaneously embraces the two truths in a way through which the two truths interfuse each other to establish a nondual dynamic. Philosophically, the nondual dynamic of the two truths also implies a nondual, holistic dynamic of being and knowing similar to the one given in Shenhui's sudden Chan. However, contemplatively speaking, unlike Shenhui's integrating gradualness in the context of suddenness, the wholeness of the sTon mun simultaneity asks its practitioner to engage the conventional in the manner of the ultimate while embodying the ultimate in the conventional. Thus, in addition to what we learned from Shenhui's sudden Chan, in which the logic of immediacy in contemplation is said to require its practitioner to artfully employ gradual cultivation, the sTon mun simultaneity tells us that the logic of immediacy in contemplation demands of its practitioner to engage all conventional phenomena, but the engagement must be done in the manner of ultimacy so that the practitioner realizes the logic of immediacy without falling into the bondage of conventionality. As this demand takes the whole as the path, it consequently places sTon mun in the camp of the fruitional vehicle within the sūric traditions just as Shenhui's sudden Chan. As a result, together with Shenhui's sudden Chan, the two understandings of the sTon mun simultaneity demonstrate, philosophically and contemplatively, the various layers underlying, as well as the variations of, the idea of immediacy.

Tracking the traces left by sTon mun and further demonstrating other innovative manifestations of the idea of immediacy, Chapter 5, "**Spontaneous Presence and Open Awareness**," presents the early teachings of Tibetan Dzogchen codified by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in his *bSam gtan mig sgron.* Following gNubs chen's exposition, I

begin the chapter examining the main teachings of Dzogchen that emphasize primordial perfection (Tib. *ye nas rdzogs pa*) and spontaneous presence (Tib. *lhun gyis grub pa*). In the discussion, we see that Dzogchen, literally meaning "great perfection" or "great completeness," teaches that all phenomena are a dynamic display (Tib. *rtsal*) within the wholeness of "primordial basis" (Tib. *gdod ma'i gzhi* or simply *gzhi*). As such, they are always in the state of perfection that can only be directly experienced in the spontaneous presence of one's self-arisen reflexive awareness (Tib. *rang byung rang rig*) or open awareness (Tib. *rig pa*).

Thus, with a unique emphasis on the principles of primordial perfection and spontaneous presence, gNubs chen's Dzogchen depicts a fruitional path on which one resumes one's original Buddhahood (Tib. *yang sangs rgyas*) in the wholeness of primordial basis and open awareness exhibiting a nondual, holistic dynamic of being and knowing seen also in the cases of Shenhui's sudden Chan and the simultaneity of sTon mun. In this resumption, we see, what one needs is neither laxity nor arduous effort but a delicate presence of spontaneity that allows the pracitioner to have a kind of "skillful effort" to traverse the path. But, similar to the spirit of Shenhui's integrating gradualness in the context of suddenness and the sTon mun engaging the conventional in the manner of ultimacy, the Dzogchen inclusion of "skillful effort" must be realized in the context of spontaneity so that the logic of immediacy in contemplation is actualized without the deviation of purposeful effort.

To further understand the teachings, I summarize and examine the nine Dzogchen views or principles presented by gNubs chen. These nine principles essentially point to the same essence (Tib. *ngo bo 'dra ba*). But, as gNubs chen has explained, due to the

different capacities of ordinary people and the different skillful means of the teachers, different presentations are needed and understood as the dynamic display of the primordial basis. Emphasizing ideas such as non-referentiality, spontaneity, self-nature, bliss, nonduality, wholeness, and suchness/just-is-ness, not only do these Dzogchen principles provide important characteristics to facilitate our understanding of Dzogchen as a whole, but they also concur with and further extend what we learn from Shenhui's sudden Chan and sTon mun regarding the logic of immediacy in contemplation. Yet, different from Shenhui's integration of suddenness and gradualness and the sTon mun simultaneous embrace of the ultimate and the conventional, gNubs chen's presentation of these Dzogchen principles especially brings a unique aroma of simplicity and naturalness (or spontaneous presence) to the logic of immediacy in contemplation.

With respect to the nine Dzogchen principles, gNubs chen also reminds us, even though the primordial basis has innumerable names, these names are simply designations. As designations, they shouldn't be reified or pursued. Rather, they only have provisional functions to help the practitioner neutralize or let go of all grasping. In this way, gNub chen essentially turns philosophical principles into instructions for contemplative practice. This practical aspect of Dzogchen is particularly illustrative in gNubs chen's explication of early Dzogchen methods for letting the mind be (Tib. *blo bzhag*) in its natural state. In essence, these early Dzogchen practices, unlike their later counterparts, do not stress a fixed set of ritual or procedures such as how to sit or visualize the deity step by step. Instead, they place an unequivocal emphasis on how Dzogchen followers should at all times *act in accord* (Tib. *mthun pa'i spyod pa*) with the "ascertained principles" (Tib. *thag chod pa'i don*) of Dzogchen in the manner of neither-grasping-nor-relinquishing. In

such a way, the contemplatives embody a Dzogchen living practice that not only takes all phenomena as the path to enlightenment but also actualizes the logic of immediacy in contemplation as *spontaneous presence*, the central feature of gNubs chen's Dzogchen teachings.

C. Conclusions and Final Remarks

To complete this journey of investigating the logic of immediacy in contemplation, Chapter 6, "**Conclusions and Significance for the Study of Religion**," first summarizes the findings of our investigation of the histories and teachings of the three Buddhist traditions, particularly juxtaposing them in relation to the logic of immediacy. It is shown that while all three traditions converge on the idea of interfusing being and knowing, ontology and epistemology, into an unbounded field of wholeness, they also bring different emphases out of the logic of immediacy in contemplation. Fundamentally, these different emphases inform us that the key to understand the logic of immediacy does not lie in Bernard Faure's proposal, namely, to "think out the intermediary."[41] Rather, it lies in understanding the manner through which the intermediary is engaged. Here, I argue, the methodological nuance is that what is applicable to cultural critique may not be applicable to contemplative studies. Implicitly accepting only dualistic epistemologies, scholars like Bernard Faure and Steven Katz prejudge the impossibility of "*pure (i.e., unmediated) experiences*"[42] and thus potentially project preconceived sociopolitical concerns onto the contemplative dimension.

Not only has our investigation of the logic of immediacy revealed new resources to

[41] Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 66.
[42] Katz, "Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism," 26.

redefine the meaning of intermediaries such as gradual cultivation, conventional means, and skillful effort, but it has also shown that the logic of immediacy is one of the defining characteristics of the fruitional vehicle. Nonetheless, we learn, immediacy is not what the Buddhist vehicle of fruition is all about, for a direct access based on a mistaken understanding of reality only accesses an incomplete fruition, if not a distorted one. To access the complete and perfect fruition, the logic of immediacy must be in accord with such fruition. In that way, the logic of immediacy in contemplation *is* how the fruitional vehicle carries out its principle of taking the fruition as the path. During our investigation, it is shown individually that each of the three teachings expounds its own philosophy of how to directly access the complete and perfect fruition (*i.e.*, a sympathetic resonance with one's awakened mind; a simultaneous access to one's all-encompassing mind-source; a spontaneous presence of the primordial basis in one's open awareness). Consequently, I conclude that the three teachings of Shenhui's sudden Chan, sTon mun, and gNubs chen's Dzogchen, albeit associated with distinctive sūtric and tantric traditions, are all fruitional vehicles embodying the logic of immediacy in contemplation.

Secondly, the significance of the contemplative perspective for the study of religion is discussed. As this perspective is sensitive to the concerns of the contemplatives, not only does it highlight such elements in the development of a religious tradition, but it is also able to ferret out subtle distinctions such as the hidden philosophical and/or contemplative import of ideas like immediacy and spontaneity, which other perspectives may not be able to provide, or even worse, may intentionally neglect. Accordingly, with a deepened contemplative understanding, what seems to be for the purpose of polemics or sectarianism from the sociopolitical perspective may have a completely different

meaning. For example, when the contemplative structure of Shenhui's sudden Chan is correctly understood, not only is his criticism against a particular meditation practice of the Northern Chan not polemic or "self-aggrandizing," but it offers a genuine warning to practitioners to look out for mistaken or one-sided understandings of Buddha's teachings. Similarly, with the aid of a contemplative lens, the two interpretations of sTon mun simultaneity are discernibly seen to reveal the subtle philosophical layers embedded in the idea of immediacy. Furthermore, when the concerns of the contemplatives are taken into account, the establishment of Chan in developmental negotiations and the disappearance of sTon mun in syncretic assimilation are not just different religious sects rising or falling in power, but different groups of practitioners or concerned people seeking a presence with different insights. In these ways, the contemplative perspective helps us to include as well as extend our reach beyond the polemic, the sectarian, and the historical so that we can better recognize the spiritual nuances of teachings under investigation as well as the values of various changes the historical movements of religious traditions may yield.

On the last stop, I bring the reader back to the "issue" of departure, *i.e.*, building upon Deutsch's proposition of "knowing religiously" to find an alternative to onto-theo-centric paradigms for religious studies. Essentially, learning from the histories and teachings of Chan, sTon mun, and Dzogchen, what I propose is twofold. The first is to offer a new paradigm to understand the nature of religious knowledge, whereas the second reflects upon the application of the logic of immediacy as a way to vitalize our everyday experience.

Due to the influence of onto-theology, religious studies based on Western traditions

regard religious knowledge ultimately as the relationship between oppositional categories such as the unconditional and the conditional, the infinite/divine and the finite/mortal, or the sacred and the profane. To resolve the "tension" between these opposite categories, Western studies of religion have mostly resorted to relegating the conditional to the unconditional, the finite to the infinite, and the profane to the sacred. Even when these "opposites" coincide, it is always the unconditional, the infinite, and the sacred that are privileged. So, the conditional, the finite, and the profane have sins, must atone, and accept grace. Such understanding values a distant metaphysical or transcendental realm over the immanent or the im-mediate, and thus risks degrading or dejecting the finite existence of living beings. As an alternative, I argue, the wholeness that embraces the principle of nonduality offers a new paradigm to resolve the tension between these oppositional categories.

Specifically, going beyond the above ontological and/or reductionist solutions, the discussed wholeness brings the seemingly metaphysical categories into a holistic field, in which ontology and epistemology, being and knowing, are thoroughly interfusing in a dynamic of nonduality. With this nondual interfusion of being and knowing, immediacy is immanent. So, there is no need for conceptual intermediaries, and the so-called "oppositional categories" are regarded as demonstrating epistemic diversity while having no ontic fixity or rigidity. Given this understanding, similar to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's ideas of the visible and the invisible, the finite could be known as an appearance or embodiment of the infinite in a particular temporal-spatial continuum, and the infinite could be considered the openness or indefiniteness of the finite in the unbounded wholeness of reality. In this way, these "opposites" are neither one nor two, a nondual

pair constantly and mutually informing each other in the wholeness of reality, of which both are expressions further attesting to the multiplicity in its totality. This solution that involves both ontology and epistemology, I believe, effectively presents a new paradigm for religion or religious studies to understand the nature of religious knowledge, in which one explores the possible relationships between being and knowing expounded by the tradition under investigation. In our case, as the logic of immediacy dictates, being and knowing are nondually integrated into a wholeness that is dynamically embodied in the spontaneous presence of self-or-open awareness.

Teleologically, it is to manifest this spontaneous presence of open awareness that one regards the logic of immediacy as religious knowledge for everyday life. Similar to Merleau-Ponty's "*question-knowing*" that has an "original manner of aiming at something," the logic of immediacy asks its practitioner to participate in the changing world with a spontaneous and open knowing directly aiming at the nature of reality. Here, not only is the direct aiming "the proper mode of our relationship with Being," but also it is an artful endeavor that must involve gradual cultivation, conventional means, as well as skillful effort in their proper contexts. As if it were to climb an ascending spiral, the spontaneous and open knowing of the direct aiming, with the power of gradual cultivation, conventional means, and skillful effort, pervades one's "view," that is, the holistic being of one's "knowing and seeing." Here, the logic of immediacy is crucial, as it sets not only the compass for the practitioner to find the "nine-story platform" rather than some "dirt mound and barbarian tomb," but also the context for all the "intermediary" practices to be employed without the dualistic and conceptual bondages and limitations implied in their original contexts (*i.e.*, in the contexts of gradualness,

conventionality, and arduous effort).

As one follows the logic of immediacy to simultaneously embrace suddenness and gradualness, ultimacy and conventionality, effort and spontaneity, one deconstructs their boundaries and interfuses them into an integral whole. This existence in total integration is, on the one hand, the state of consummation and, on the other hand, a tapestry of wholeness, on which myriad categories of analysis or fields of knowledge are woven together to form its diverse and vibrant patterns which we call "everyday experiences." In this way, the logic of immediacy grounds one's existential consummation in everyday life, but it grounds the consummation with a vitalization that is rooted in one's "unique style or manner" of knowing, namely, a subjective engagement that is directly in and of the being. Here, the reality is not so much characterized by the statement, "I think, therefore I am." Instead, it is that "I *am* a *knowing*," a knowing that is ever-lively in openness and love as long as one does not limit it with habitual tendency or conceptual reification. Insofar as it is ever lively, this open and compassionate knowing also helps its practitioner untangle habitual tendency and conceptual reification. In mutual interfusion and permeation, the logic of immediacy makes a disentanglement a no-entanglement, with which everything unfolds itself in non-abiding becoming.

PART I

An Origin Narrative and an Exemplar of the Logic of Immediacy: The Case of Chinese Chan

Chapter 1. How *Chan* Became Chan: From Early Chinese *Dhyāna* Teachings to the Distinguishing Features of Chan Buddhism

Immediacy, or more precisely, sudden awakening (Ch. *dunwu* 頓悟) can be said to be a hallmark of Chan Buddhism. To unfold the complex set of theses related to the idea of immediacy, we begin with a historical study that discusses how the idea of immediacy emerges over time. Setting out to find the distinguishing features of Chan Buddhism that underscore the significance of suddenness and spontaneity for contemplation, Chapter 1 thus presents an origin narrative that discusses how the idea of sudden awakening became the central tenet of Chinese Chan. In effect, this narrative, on the one hand, grounds the idea of immediacy in history and, on the other hand, illustrates the philosophical principles underlying the logic of immediacy in contemplation. As the narrative is informed by the contemplative concerns of Chan adepts, it also provides an alternative reading of the early Chan history, for such history has been mostly studied from the sociopolitical perspective in the past.[1]

Generally speaking, scholars of early Chan history, including Hu Shi 胡適, John McRae, and Bernard Faure, consider Shenhui 神會 (684-758), the initial proponent of Huineng's 慧能 (638-713) "Southern Sect" (Ch. *nanzong* 南宗), the catalyst who made the members of the Chan School (Ch. *chanzong* 禪宗) consciously formulate the teachings of subitism (*i.e.*, sudden awakening).[2] However, they also agree that Shenhui was not the first one advocating such doctrine in Chan, for subitist teachings can also be founded in the Dongshan (or "East Mountain") Teaching (Ch. *dongshan famen* 東山法

[1] See *e.g.*, Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*; Halperin, *Out of the Cloister*; Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati*; Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*; and Cole, *Fathering Your Father*.
[2] See *e.g.*, McRae, "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism."

門) established by Daoxin 道信 (580-651) and Hongren 弘忍 (601-674), the fourth and fifth patriarchs of the Chan School, and continued by Shenxiu 神秀 (606?-706), who traditionally has been recognized as the representative of the "Northern Sect" (Ch. *beizong* 北宗).[3] Nonetheless, according to the general view of Chan practitioners, it was Bodhidharma 菩提達摩 (d. 536?) who brought the teaching of sudden awakening originally taught by the historical Buddha on Vulture Peak (Skt. *gṛdhrakūṭa-parvata*; Ch. *lingjiu shan* 靈鷲山) from India to China in the second half of the fifth century.

Accordingly, the early history of Chan Buddhism is a multifaceted subject consisting of various points of view, each of which contributes certain pattern(s) to the composite tapestry of Chan. To better understand this composite picture with respect to the contemplative concerns of Chan practitioners, which past studies have not emphasized much, this chapter thus depicts an origin narrative of Chan subitism by tracing the evolution of early Chinese *chan* 禪 or *dhyāna* teachings so as to uncover the deeper meaning of *chan*, to which Chan, as a meditative tradition, owes its name. Here, before going further, it should be worthwhile noting the difference between *chan* and Chan in my presentation. As later discussion will show, the Chinese term *chan* is derived from the Sanskrit term *dhyāna*. Thus, I use it to refer to general meditative teachings and practices either applicable to all Buddhist schools or before the emergence of Chan Buddhism in China. Yet, I use Chan only to refer to teachings, practices, or practitioners pertaining to the Chan School or Chan Buddhism. Consequently, a *chan* or *dhyāna*

[3] See, *e.g.*, McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, Chapter II; Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 1-5; Du and Wei, *Zhongguo chanzong tongshi* 中國禪宗通史 (*The General History of Chinese Chan School*), Chapter 2, eps., 84-89; and Yang, *Tang wudai chanzong shi* 唐五代禪宗史 (*The History of Chan School in the Tang and Five Dynasties*), Chapter 3.

monk/practitioner is a person who practices *dhyāna* but not necessarily Chan, and he or she may belong to any Buddhist school.

In the following narrative depicting how *chan* became Chan, I argue that when Chinese *chanseng* 禪僧 or *dhyāna* monks, the contemplative recipients of Indian meditative teachings, conceptually and practically brought *chan* out of the traditional Buddhist context of the Three Studies (Skt. *śikṣā-traya*; Ch. *sanxue* 三學; Tib. *bslab pa gsum*), they, with that very act, set *chan* onto the path of becoming Chan. This transformation, I will demonstrate, was inspired by a mutual development between Chinese *dhyāna* monks' understanding of original or innate awakening (Ch. *benjue* 本覺) and the mind-nature (Ch. *xinxing* 心性) teaching of Bodhidharma. Eventually, this mutual development between the local and foreign *chan* teachings gave rise to the formation of Chan Buddhism. In the formation, due to their contemplative concerns, Chan adepts developed the three distinguishing features that essentially characterize Chan as the special mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures, the tradition of sudden awakening via the direct seeing of one's true nature. To further probe into the meaning of this origin narrative of Chan Buddhism seen from the contemplative perspective, I then reflect upon the question of searching for a "pure" practice to realize a "pure" Chan to conclude this chapter.

I. *Chan* in Its Early Socioreligious Contexts

Historically speaking, Chinese *chanfa* 禪法 or *dhyāna* teachings have gone through various transformations, which not only have influenced the meditation practices of Chinese Buddhists, but also inspired the formation of a unique practice system, namely,

the Chan School. This Chan School has had great impact not only on the development of Chinese Buddhism. Its influence on Eastern Asian Buddhism has also been prevalent, if not ubiquitous. In the last centuries, the teachings of Chan have also emerged onto the stage of World religions. Yet, what is *chanfa*, from which Chan Buddhism obtains its name? How did the early Chinese Buddhists understand it? Primarily based on the "Dhyāna Practice" sections (Ch. *xichan pian* 習禪篇) of Huijiao's 慧皎 (497-554) *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 (*Biographies of Eminent Monks*; hereafter the *Biographies*) and Daoxuan's 道宣 (596-667) *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳 (*Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*; hereafter the *Continued Biographies*),[4] I delve into the various transformations of Chinese *dhyāna* teachings that led to the formation of Chan Buddhism and present them in the following five parts: (a) *chan* as an approach to *samādhi*, (b) *chan* as an approach to reality, (c) developments of *dhyāna* lineages and practice styles, (d) local and foreign influence on the development of *chan*, and (e) *chan* in early Tang: clues from Daoxuan's comments.

A. **Chan** ***as an Approach to*** **Samādhi**

Etymologically speaking, the Chinese term *chan* is an abbreviation of *chan-na* 禪那, the Chinese transliteration of Sanskrit term *dhyāna*, which Kumārajīva 鳩摩羅什 (344-413) translated as "contemplative practice" (Ch. *siwei xiu* 思惟修) and Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664) later translated as "quiet reflection" (Ch. *jinglv* 靜慮). As it generally refers to meditation practice, early Chinese Buddhists have understood it as the practice

[4] Huijiao's *Biographies* was finished around the year of 530 and can be found in T. 50 (2059): 322c-423a. Daoxuan's *Continued Biographies* was finished in the year of 645 and appended in the year of 665 before his death. It can be found in T. 50 (2060): 425a-707a.

of "focusing the chaotic mind"[5] or "concentrating one's mind quietly on one object and thoughtfully reflecting upon it."[6] In so doing, one can abandon afflictions such as the Five Coverings (Skt. *pañcāvaraṇa*; Ch. *wugai* 五蓋, Tib. *sgrib pa lnga*)[7]; thus, it is also called *qi'e* 棄惡 (literally, "abandoning the vice").

As a cause, the practice of *chan* can give rise to the virtues of wisdom, miraculous powers or clairvoyance (Skt. *abhijñā*; Ch. *shentong* 神通; Tib. *mngon par shes pa*), Four Immeasurable Minds (Skt. *catvāri-apramāṇāna*; Ch. *si wuliang xin* 四無量心; Tib. *tshad med bzhi*)[8], and so forth, so, it is also known as *gongde conglin* 功德叢林 (literally, "virtue-forest"). Furthermore, since it can bring one to deep concentration, it is also called *ding* 定. In Chinese Buddhism, *chan* and *ding* are usually put together to refer to generic meditation practice. Subsequently, in the *Dasheng yizhang* 大乘義章 (*Chapters on the Meaning of Mahāyāna [Teachings]*) written by Huiyuan 慧遠(523-592), it is said,

> [With respect to the name of *chan*,] there are various aliases. In short, there are seven: First it is called *chan* 禪. Second, it is *ding* 定. Third, it is *samādhi* 三昧. Fourth, it is *samāpatti* 正受. Fifth, it is *samāhita* 三摩提. Sixth, it is *śamatha* 奢摩他. Seventh, it is *vimokṣā* 解脫; also known as renunciation [from afflictions] 背捨. The so-called *chan* is its Chinese term. Here [in China] it is [literally] translated as contemplative practice. It is also known as the forest of

[5] Nāgārjuna, *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śastra* (*Dazhidu lun* 大智度論, translated by Kumārajīva), T. 25 (1509): 180c13-14;『攝諸亂心。』

[6] Maitreya, *Yogācārabhūmi-śastra* (*Yuqie shidi lun* 瑜伽師地論, translated by Xuanzang), T. 30 (1579): 467c7-8;『 於一所緣，繫念寂靜，正審思慮。』

[7] The Five Coverings or Five Obscurations are the five kinds of affliction that cover or block off one's true mind-nature, thus resulting in the nonarising of wholesome deeds. They are greed 貪欲, anger 瞋恚, dullness 惛沈, agitation 掉悔, and doubt 疑.

[8] The Four Immeasurable Minds are four kinds of altruistic concern developed through four meditation practices, namely, (1) the immeasurable mind of kindness 慈無量心 that bestows joy or happiness to all sentient beings; (2) the immeasurable mind of compassion 悲無量心 that saves others from suffering; (3) the immeasurable mind of joy 喜無量心 developed by seeing others freed from suffering; and (4) the immeasurable mind of impartiality 捨無量心 that rises above all dualistic discriminations.

virtues.[9]

Clearly, from the above passage, we know that there have developed various meanings of *chan*, but early Chinese Buddhists (*i.e.*, before the emergence of Chan Buddhism) have mostly understood *chan* as an approach either to quiet the mind so as to see causal conditions more clearly or to develop *samādhi* concentration so as to give rise to *prajñā* wisdom. Regarding this, it is evident in Huijiao's *Biographies*. In the general conclusion of his "Dhyāna Practice" section, Huijiao writes,

> The so-called *chan* is [an approach] making myriad things wondrous. Thus, there is nothing it does not touch upon; there are no situations it cannot examine. However, to touch upon things and examine situations, it requires [one to have] stillness so as to have clarity. It is like when the waves in the pond rest, the fish and rocks [in it] will be clearly seen. When the mind-water is transparent, there is nothing being covered anymore.[10]

Therefore, how can *chan* help us to examine all situations with lucidity? It is when the practitioner quiets his or her mind in stillness that everything will appear clearly without distortion. However, this idea of practicing *chan* to quiet one's mind, according to Huijiao's understanding, is only a foundation for other Buddhist practices such as the development of wisdom. Huijiao quotes *Laozi* 老子 and *Dazhidu lun* 大智度論 (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śastra*) to explain that the establishment of a foundation is like using exercise to make one's body healthy and strong. When one is healthy and strong, one can then go out and perform beneficial deeds. In Buddhist terms, only after the practitioner has quieted the mind with the work of *samādhi* or meditative concentration

[9] Huiyuan, *Dasheng yizhang*, T. 44 (1851): 718a4-8;『名別不同，略有七種。一名為禪。二名為定。三名三昧。四名正受。五名三摩提。六名奢摩他。七名解脫，亦名背捨。禪者，是其中國之言，此翻名為思惟修習，亦云功德叢林。』

[10] Huijiao, *Gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2059): 400b16-19;『禪也者，妙萬物而為言，故能無法不緣，無境不察。然緣法察境，唯寂迺明。其猶淵池息浪，則徹見魚石。心水既澄，則凝照無隱。』

can the practitioner realize the teaching of *prajñā* wisdom and thus help liberating other sentient beings and fulfill the activities of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.[11]

In terms of transmission, according to Huijiao's *Biographies*, Chinese *chan* teachings and practices were gradually systematized only after their related scriptures were translated by monk translators including An Shigao 安世高 (c. 2nd century) and Dharmarakṣa 竺法護 (c. 3rd century).[12] What An Shigao translated include *Yinchiru jing* 陰持入經, *Anban shouyi jing* 安般守意經 (*Ānāpānasmṛti-sūtra*), and *Shi'er men jing* 十二門經 (*Dvādaśamukha-sūtra*). These scriptures mostly represent the *dhyāna* and *abhidharma* (*i.e.*, meditative and philosophical) teachings from the Buddhist school of the Sarvāstivāda, a tradition belonging to the Theravāda. Under this system, *chan* or *dhyāna* practice is to develop *samādhi*, whereas *abhidharma* is for the study of *prajñā*.[13] Here, *samādhi* is the basis to obtain *prajñā*, but it also is the method to give rise to *prajñā*. Therefore, with this understanding, ***chan* effectively is an approach or a methodology to develop *samādhi* or deep concentration**, with which one then obtains wisdom to know the causes of afflictions, untie karmic knots, and eradicate suffering, thus attaining liberation. In the *Biographies*, Huijiao hence states,

> Thus, Four Immeasurable Minds and Six Miraculous Powers arise from *chan*. Eight Renunciations and Ten Fields rely on *ding* [an alias of *chan*] to realize. Consequently, we know that *chan-ding* has great

[11] See Huijiao, *Gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2059): 400b19-23.

[12] For an introduction to the development of Chinese Buddhism in this early period, see, *e.g.*, Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, 18-43 and Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, 21-53.

[13] In An Shigao's system, under the rubric of *dhyāna*, it includes meditative approaches such as Four Dhyānas 四禪, Four Immeasurable Minds 四無量心, Four Absorptions 四空定, and Five Antidotal Contemplations 五停心觀. Under the rubric of *abhidharma*, it includes fundamental Buddhist teachings such as Four Noble Truths 四聖諦, Five Aggregates 五陰, Six Objects 六入, Noble Eightfold Path 八正道, Twelve Links of Dependent Co-origination 十二因緣, and Eighteen Fields 十八界.

use.[14]

In the early years of its dissemination, *chan*, as an approach to develop *samādhi*, has been emphatically associated with *abhijñā* or clairvoyance. In his *Biographies*, Huijiao writes,

> The function of *chan*, when it is shown, belongs to [the realm of] *abhijñā*. Consequently, it can place the three thousand [worlds] in the size of a pore; it can make four oceans into curds; it can [enable one to] pass through stonewalls without any obstruction; it can hold up everyone without a single one being left behind.[15]

Given this understanding, early Chinese Buddhists did not have any problem accepting miraculous events performed by *chan* monks who had developed deep concentration. So, we see records describing how *chan* monks Sengguang 僧光 (c. 4th-5th centuries) and Tanyou 曇猷 (c. 4th-5th centuries) overpowered the gods, or how Xuangao 玄高 (402-444), another renowned *chan* monk, resurrected after his death.[16] Yet, even though *dhyāna* practice may bring such extraordinary abilities, if *chan* practitioners attach themselves to these abilities and are under the influence of desires without wisdom, early Chinese Buddhists understood that as only obtaining a "firebug torch" (Ch. *yingjue* 螢爝) and abandoning the light of sun and moon.[17] Such behavior is a trap for the practitioners and will not lead to Buddhahood.

[14] Huijiao, *Gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2059): 400b23-25;『是以，四等六通，由禪而起。八除十人，藉定方成。故知禪定為用大矣哉。』

[15] Huijiao, *Gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2059): 400c3-5;『禪用為顯，屬在神通。故使三千宅乎毛孔，四海結為凝酥，過石壁而無壅，擎大眾而弗遺。』

[16] For their biographies, see Huijiao, *Gaoseng zhuan*; particularly, for Sengguang's 僧光 biography, see T. 50 (2059): 395c5-25; for Tanyou's 曇猷 biography, see T. 50 (2059): 395c26-396b16; for Xuangao's 玄高 biography, see T. 50 (2059): 397a3-398b11.

[17] See Huijiao, *Gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2059): 400c7-10.

B. Chan *as an Approach to Reality*

Besides the Theravāda teachings translated by An Shigao, under the effort of translators like Lokaṣema 支婁迦讖 (c. 2nd century) and Dharmarakṣa 竺法護 (c. 3rd century), various Mahāyāna scriptures were also translated into Chinese in these formative years of Chinese Buddhism. Particularly, their translations of the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras* had positive and close interactions with Daoist *xuanxue* 玄學 or "abstruse study" in the period of Wei and Jin dynasties 魏晉 (220-420), which in turn made *prajñāpāramitā* teaching very appealing to Chinese Buddhists.[18] Generally speaking, *prajñāpāramitā* teaching deconstructs language and penetrates appearances. It can be said that the "deconstructing property" of the *prajñāpāramitā* teaching had inspired *chan* practitioners at the time to come up with innovative ideas, especially in terms of transcending the understanding that *chan* practice is only used as an antidote to habitual tendency or as an approach to develop *samādhi*.

Therefore, under the inspiration of *prajñāpāramitā* teaching and Mahāyāna *dhyāna* teaching from the scriptures like *Bozhou sanmei jing* 般舟三昧經 (*Pratyutpannasamādhi-sūtra*) and *Shoulengyan sanmei jing* 首楞嚴三昧經 (*Śūrangamasamādhi-sūtra*), *chan* practice was gradually developed and transformed into an approach for one to directly realize nirvāṇa and attain the truth of Buddhist reality. Consequently, after asking Kumārajīva to translate some of the Mahāyāna *dhyāna* scriptures, in his preface to the *Guanzhongchu chanjing* 關中出禪經 (*The Chan*

[18] For an introduction to the development of Chinese Buddhism in this period of Wei and Jin dynasties, see, *e.g.*, Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, 44-159 and Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, 57-120. For a detailed study on the interaction between Daoist *xuanxue* and Buddhist *prajñā* teaching, see, *e.g.*, Yang, *Bore yu xuanxue* 般若與玄學 (*Prajñā and Abstruse Study*).

Scripture Translated in Guanzhong), Sengrui 僧叡 (c. 4th century) writes, "The teaching of *chan* is an initial gate to the Way; it is also the essential path to nirvāṇa."[19]

Also, Xie Fu 謝敷 (c. 4th century), a renowned *xuanxue* scholar and hermit, directly pointed out the difference between Mahāyāna *dhyāna* practice and that of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha. In his preface to the *Anban shouyi jing*, Xie Fu writes,

> A Bodhisattva deeply realizes the root of being and penetrates the nonbeing of causes and conditions. Having realized the root, [he understands that] every being is empty by itself. Having penetrated the nonbeing, [he understands that] every causal condition is constantly serene. Empty by itself, so one does not exit being to enter nonbeing. Constantly serene, so one does not exhaust conditions to return to the void. Abiding in the principle, [he understands that] being is not something to bind [oneself]. Because of nonbinding, so there is nothing to be liberated. If there is someone who apprehends this principle from the mind and realizes the law of being, then one will not rely on the outer to quiet the inner, and one will not depend on *dhyāna* to achieve wisdom. So, it is said that *avaivartika* [one who has realized the state of non-retrogression] does not follow the Four Dhyānas.[20]

Subsequently, he concludes,

> Therefore, a Bodhisattva who practices *dhyāna* is not for the sake of guarding the serenity. Rather, he attunes the mind to traverse the profound reality.[21]

Accordingly, later Mahāyāna *chan* practitioners, due to their deep understanding of emptiness (Ch. *kong* 空) and existence (Ch. *you* 有), realized that reality has neither outer nor inner; it is always serene and lucid. So, unlike early *chan* practitioners who "[relied] on the outer to quiet the inner, and … [depended] on *dhyāna* to achieve

[19] Sengyou 僧祐 (445-518), *Chu sanzang ji ji* 出三藏記集 (*Collection of Notes on the Translation of the Tripiṭaka*), T. 55 (2145): 65a20;『禪法者，向道之初門，泥洹之津徑也。』

[20] Ibid, T. 55 (2145): 44a18-23;『菩薩者，深達有本，暢因緣無。達本者，有有自空。暢無者，因緣常寂。自空故，不出有以入無。常寂故，不盡緣以歸空。住理，而有非所縛。非縛故，無無所脫。苟厝心領要，觸有悟理者，則不假外以靜內，不因禪而成慧。故曰阿惟越致，不隨四禪也。』

[21] Ibid, T. 55 (2145): 44a26-27;『故開士行禪，非為守寂，在遊心於玄冥矣。』

wisdom," they directly grasped the ultimate principle to attune their minds to the ultimate reality (Ch. *shixiang* 實相). In this way, instead of being an approach to develop *samādhi*, ***chan*, under the influence of *prajñāpāramitā* teaching, was transformed into an approach to directly access reality and realize the truth of Buddha dharma**.

However, after surveying the "Dhyāna Practice" section of Huijiao's *Biographies*, it is evident that this Mahāyāna understanding of the *dhyāna* practice was clearly not the mainstream at the time. Yet, we will find out later that this Mahāyāna *dhyāna* understanding, together with the *tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha-nature doctrine made popular in the period of South-North dynasties 南北朝 (439-581), had established a firm theoretical foundation for the later Chan sudden awakening teaching.[22] In fact, around this time, Daosheng 道生 (355-434), one of the four great students of Kumārajīva, had already proposed the idea of sudden awakening based on his understanding of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* in this early stage of Chinese *chan* development.[23] Even though it was not completely accepted by other Buddhist practitioners and caused much controversy at the time, nonetheless, it still greatly influenced the development of the later Chan School emerging some two centuries later.[24]

C. Developments of Dhyāna *Lineages and Practice Styles*

In terms of practice institutionalization, the many *dhyāna* scriptures translated by

[22] For an introduction to the development of Chinese Buddhism in the period of South-North dynasties, see, *e.g.*, Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, 180-285 and Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, 121-183.
[23] For a discussion of Daosheng's sudden awakening, see, *e.g.*, Lai, "Tao-sheng's Theory of Sudden Enlightenment Re-examined" and Gong, "Cong Daosheng de dunwu xueshuo fengxi zaoqi chan de yuandun yu cidi guannian de youlai 從道生的頓悟學說分析早期禪的圓頓與次第觀念的由來 (From Daosheng's Theory of Sudden Awakening to Analyze the Origins of the Ideas of Subitism and Gradualism in Early Chan)."
[24] For a discussion of Daosheng's possible influence on the development of Chan, see, *e.g.*, Gong, "Cong Daosheng de dunwu xueshuo fengxi zaoqi chan de yuandun yu cidi guannian de youlai."

Kumārajīva and others during the period of Wei and Jin dynasties had allowed *chan*, as well as other Buddhist, practitioners to realize the importance of a systematic structure for the *dhyāna* practice and the need for qualified *dhyāna* teachers. That is the reason why Sengrui criticized early *dhyāna* teaching to be "without a systematic structure and without a lineage; even the discipline for the practitioners was also lacking,"[25] and Huiyuan 慧遠 (334-416) dispatched his students to the West (*i.e.*, Central Asia) to look for appropriate teaching.[26] And, Zhiyan 智嚴 (350-427) even traveled in person to Kashmir to invite Dhyāna Master Buddhabhadra 佛馱跋陀羅 (359-429) to come to China to teach *dhyāna*.[27]

As a matter of fact, at the time *chan* practitioners came to understand *chan*'s hands-on nature and gradually formed the understanding that "one who learns the Way in the mountains, without a master, will never be able to realize the Way."[28] Hence, they realized that *dhyāna* practice could not rely on words only. It was more important to have a master who could directly instruct the disciple. As a result, *chan* practitioners began to form *chan* groups and lineages, which, I would argue, unintentionally yet unavoidably led to the later formation of the Chan School. Put another way, one can say that the emergence of *chan* groups emphasizing lineages significantly facilitated the *chan* practitioners to develop a consciousness which differentiated themselves from other Buddhist practitioners. This early consciousness effectively contributed to the formation of Chan, even though its real differences from other Buddhist schools emerged much

[25] Sengyou, *Chu sanzang ji ji*, T. 55 (2145): 65a21-22;『既不根悉，又無受法，學者之戒蓋闕如也。』

[26] For an account of Huiyuan's biography, teachings, and community, see, *e.g.*, Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, 204-253 and Ch'en, *Buddhism in China*, 103-112.

[27] For an account of Buddhabhadra and his lineage, see *e.g.*, Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 33-40.

[28] Sengyou, *Chu sanzang ji ji*, T. 55 (2145): 65a26;『人在山中學道，無師道終不成。』

later in actuality.

Regarding this development, in the "Dhyāna Practice" section of his *Continued Biographies*, Daoxuan describes it as follows:

> After this [Kumārajīva translated the *dhyāna* scriptures], [*dhyāna* practice] existed with many lineages. Tanying 曇影 [c. 4th-5th centuries] and Daorong 道融 [c. 4th-5th centuries] worked hard in the north of Huai River. Zhiyan and Huiguan 慧觀 [c. 4th-5th centuries] diligently promulgated [the teachings] in the east of Yangtze River. Among the assemblies in the mountains, Huiyuan['s group] was the model. Among the maverick-like practitioners, Sengqun 僧群 [c. 4th-5th centuries] appeared to be the most unique.[29]

From this, we know that at the time there existed many *chan* lineages, and they occupied places covering some or most of the present day Henan 河南, Anhui 安徽, Jiangxi 江西, Jiangsu 江蘇, and Zhejiang 浙江 areas (*i.e.*, most of the Central and Southeast China). As for their practice styles, one was gathering together as a community in the mountains while the other was living by themselves and wandering like mavericks. The so-called "assemblies in the mountains" are like the one established by Huiyuan, who founded a forest monastery (Ch. *conglin daochang* 叢林道場) and formed a fellowship to practice the Buddha dharma together in the Lushan 廬山 of Jiangxi. On the other hand, the so-called "maverick-like practitioners" are like Sengqun, who built a hut in Huoshan[30] 霍山 and lived by himself "in poverty with integrity, eating vegetables and reciting sūtras."[31] Evidently, even after the formation of the Chan School, these two styles of *chan* practice have always existed side by side.[32]

[29] Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 596a13-16;『自斯厥後，祖習逾繁。曇影、道融厲精於淮北。智嚴、慧觀勤志於江東。山栖結眾，則慧遠標宗。獨往孤征，則僧群顯異。』
[30] It is located in the present day Anhui Province.
[31] Huijiao, *Gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2059): 404a2-3;『清貧守節，蔬食誦經。』
[32] Of course, this is not saying that these two styles of *chan* practice are only observed by Chan adepts.

The dissemination of *chan* practice, even in the chaotic wartime of Wuhu 五胡 (304-439) and South-North dynasties (439-581), was not obstructed. In fact, the people displaced by the wars ironically even helped its propagation. Part of the reason was that the government could not effectively relocate these displaced people so that many of them became monks and nuns. According to the study done by Du Jiwen 杜繼文 and Wei Daoru 魏道儒, from 477 CE to 534 CE, in the nation of North Wei 北魏 alone, Buddhist monasteries increased from 6,478 units to some 30,000 units, and monks and nuns increased from 77,258 to some 2 millions.[33] The increased numbers not only were amazingly large, but because the increased number of monasteries was not proportional to that of the increased monastic members,[34] many monks and nuns became wanderers. In traveling, due to their easy portability (in comparison to sūtra study and exegesis), *chan* practice and sūtra recitation naturally became their choice of cultivation. As a result, it gave rise to the tendency in later *chan* development that *chan* practitioners, while considering sūtra study or exegesis only as a supplement, focus primarily on sitting meditation and sūtra recitation,[35] which to an extent characterize the initial stage of the Chan School and facilitate it to distinguishing itself from other schools of Chinese

Indeed, advocates of other Buddhist schools including Tiantai 天台 and Huayan 華嚴 also perform these two styles of practice.

[33] See Du and Wei, *Zhongguo chanzong tongshi*, 57.

[34] The number of monasteries was increased by about 4.5 times, whereas the number of monastics was increased by about 25 times.

[35] According to Du and Wei's *Zhongguo chanzong tongshi*, in his *Luoyang qielan ji* 洛陽伽藍記 (*A Record of Buddhist Monasteries in Luoyang*), Yang Xuanzhi 楊衒之 (c. 6th century) depicts a story of how King Yama judged monks to emphasize the importance of sitting meditation and sūtra recitation. In the story, the monks who practiced sitting meditation and recited sūtras diligently ascended to the heavens, whereas the monk who expounded the sūtras with arrogance and pride was sent to a "black house" (Ch. *heishe* 黑舍; implying the hells). With this story, Du and Wei further argue that there were two competing tendencies of Buddhist practice at the time, one emphasizing sūtra exegesis and monastery construction and the other emphasizing sitting meditation and sūtra recitation. For them, the competition between the two camps, due to its strong intensity and lasting struggling, had facilitated the *chan* monks to form an independent school named after their main practice, *i.e.*, *chan* (Du andWei, *Zhongguo chanzong tongshi*, 58).

Buddhism.

D. Local and Foreign Influence on the Development of Chan

During the South-North dynasties, many more Mahāyāna sūtras were translated into Chinese. Particularly, they include those expounding the teaching of *tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha-nature such as the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, *Dasheng qixing lun* 大乘起信論 (*Treatise on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna*), and *Foxing lun* 佛性論 (*Treatise on Buddha-Nature*). Various studies have demonstrated that these scriptures have made great impact on Chinese Buddhism that in turn influenced greatly the development of Eastern Asian Buddhism.[36] Doctrinally, the teaching of *tathāgatagarbha* advocates that each and every sentient being is equally endowed with the Buddha-nature that "neither increases a bit in the saint nor decreases a bit in the ordinary."[37]

This teaching of innately existent Buddha-nature can be said to be reminiscent of traditional Chinese theories of mind-nature (Ch. *xinxing sixiang* 心性思想) that have been prevalent and influential among the educated since the time before the Han 漢 dynasty (206 BCE-220).[38] As a matter of fact, it is arguable that these Chinese theories of mind-nature have made concrete impact on Chinese Buddhists in terms of the way they understood Buddha-nature. For example, terminologically, Buddha-nature and mind-nature have become synonyms, and soteriologically, realizing Buddhahood has

[36] For related studies, see, *e.g.*, Suzuki (trans), *The Lankāvatāra Sūtra*, and Suzuki, *Studies in the Lankāvatāra Sūtra*; Hakeda (trans, with commentary), *The Awakening of Faith Attributed to Aśvaghoṣa*, and Lai, "The *Chan-ch'a ching*"; and King, *Buddha Nature*.

[37] 『在聖不增，在凡不減。』

[38] Regarding traditional Chinese theories of mind-nature, for an account of Mencius's 孟子 (372-289 BCE) *xingshan shuo* 性善說 or "the thought expounding human nature inclining towards goodness," see, *e.g.*, Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 51-60. For an account of Xunzi's 荀子 (313-238 BCE) *xing'e shuo* 性惡說 or "the thought expounding human nature inclining towards wickedness," see, *e.g.*, Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 128-135.

become the same as realizing one's pure mind-nature.[39] From this perspective, it can be said that Chinese understandings of mind-nature have inspired Buddhist contemplatives to innovatively uncover the praxis aspects of *tathāgatagarbha* so as to develop original approaches of realizing it.[40] In this way, in addition to the aforementioned factors of genealogical consciousness and different practice emphasis, the emergence of Chan could also be said in part as a result of certain *chan* contemplatives attempting to develop direct and experiential relationships to classic Buddhist ideas like *tathāgatagarbha*, in which sudden awakening to one's *tathāgatagarbha*, Buddha-nature, or pure mind became the hallmark of Chan Buddhism; more on this unique Chan development will be discussed later.

Not only by the effort of local *chan* practitioners but also through the new teachings brought in by various foreign translators and *dhyāna* masters, Chinese *chan* teachings have been developed further. Especially around the end of the fifth century and the beginning of the sixth century, there have been various influential *dhyāna* masters including Buddha 佛陀 or Bhadra 跋陀, Ratnamati 勒那摩提, and Bodhidharma, who were all teaching in China.[41] According to Daoxuan's *Continued Biographies*, at the time

[39] For a study of the interaction between the Confucian theory of mind-nature and the Buddhist teaching of Buddha-nature, see, *e.g.*, Lai, *Foxue yu ruxue* 佛學與儒學 (*Buddhistic Study and Confucianism*), 42-97.

[40] According to Robert Buswell's study, during the 6th and 7th centuries, owing to the debates concerning philosophy/theory and practice, there were Buddhist practitioners attempting to "reveal the praxis aspects of tathāgatagarbha and amalavijñāna" and trying to transform them "from abstract philosophical theories into pragmatic tools of practice" (Buswell, *The Formation of Ch'an Ideology in China and Korea*, 77). For Buswell, the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* was part of that project.

[41] (1) Dhyāna Master Buddha/Bhadra came to China during the period of North Wei 北魏 (386-534). According to his biography in Daoxuan's *Continued Biographies*, Emperor Xiaowen of North Wei 北魏孝文帝 (r. 471-499), in honor of Dhyāna Master Buddha/Bhadra, particularly built a monastery for him in the then capital. Later, after moving the capital to Luoyang, the Emperor built another monastery for him in Songshan 嵩山, which later became the well-known Shaolin si 少林寺. For a more detailed account of Dhyāna Master Buddha/Bhadra's biography, see Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060); 551a21-551b26. (2) Dhyāna Master Ratnamati came to Luoyang in the year of 508. According to the brief account of his biography in Daoxuan's *Continued Biographies* (under Bodhiruci's 菩提流支 biography),

the practice of *chanfa* (*i.e.*, *dhyāna* teachings) had not just been restricted to the area of Central China; rather, it had been propagated to all of China. There were independent wandering *chan* monks,[42] and there were also four main *chan* systems gradually emerging. These systems were: (1) the Chou-Shi 稠實 system that advocated the traditional *abhidharma-dhyāna* teaching and was led by the disciple of Dhyāna Master Buddha/Bhadra, Sengchou 僧稠 (480-560), and the disciple of Dhyāna Master Ratnamati, Sengshi 僧實 (476-563), in Eastern and Northern-Central China; (2) the Bodhidharma system that was led by Dhyāna Master Bodhidharma in the area of Central China and expounded the meditation teaching of Mahāyāna *biguan* 壁觀 or "wall-contemplation"; (3) the Tiantai 天台 system that was led by the disciples of Huisi 慧思 (515-577), namely, Zhicui 智璀 (c. 6th century) and Zhiyi 智顗 (538-597), in Southern China and promoted the teaching of Tiantai *zhiguan* 止觀 or "calming-insight"; and (4) the Huizan 慧瓚 system that was led by Dhyāna Master Huizan 慧瓚 (536-607) in Northwestern China and taught the practice of strict asceticism (Ch. *toutuo xing* 頭陀

Ratnamati was particularly well versed in the teaching of *dhyāna*, and under the royal command, together with Bodhiruci, they translated scriptures including Vasubandhu's *Shidi lun* 十地論 (*Daśabhūmi-vyākhyāna*); see Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060); 429a5-9. (3) According to his biography in Daoxuan's *Continued Biographies*, Dhyāna Master Bodhidharma came to China during the years of Liu Song 劉宋 (470-478), but other accounts have him come to China during the years of Liang Putong 梁普通 period (520-526). Traditionally, he has been attributed as the founder of Chinese Chan, however, when Daoxuan was writing his biography, the name of the Chan School was not yet existent; see Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060); 551b27-551c26. For a more detailed discussion on Bodhidharma, see, *e.g.*, McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, 15-19; Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 138-144; and the references therein.

[42] In his *Continued Biographies*, Daoxuan writes, "As to [the cases of] Huiyue's 慧越 stroking a tiger's whiskers, Daoshun's 道舜 observing [one's next life through] the shadow of a cow, Zhitong's 智通 inducing miraculous events, and Sengting's 僧定 overpowering powerful bandits, [these wandering *chan* monks] had integrity like that of iron stones and aspiration as high as the skies. I will make my effort to record their merits for later generations so as to elaborate the virtues [of the practice] (至如慧越之捋虎鬚，道舜之觀牛影，智通之感奇相，僧定之制強賊，節操如鐵石，志概等雲霄。備彰後傳，略為盡美)" (Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 597a10-13).

行).[43]

From Daoxuan's description of these four systems and their teachings, we can make the following observations about the *chanfa* at the time. First, even though the name *chanzong* 禪宗 or "Chan School" had not yet existed, the existence of *chan* systems emphasizing genealogies was already evident. This phenomenon, as suggested above, facilitated the development of a genealogical consciousness that eventually led to the formation of Chan as an independent tradition. In fact, at the time when Daoxuan was writing his *Continued Biographies*, *i.e.*, around the second half of the seventh century, what Bodhidharma taught had been called under the name of One-Vehicle Sect of South India (Ch. *nan tianzhu yisheng zong* 南天竺一乘宗),[44] which surely can be stated as a precursor of the later Chan School.

Secondly, we know that by the time of the sixth century, *chan* teachings and practices had been developed to exist in various forms. Among them, Sengchou and Sengshi taught the practices of mindfulness meditation (Ch. *nianchu chan* 念處禪) and nine-stages calm abiding (Ch. *jiu ci tiaoxin* 九次調心) that went back to the times of An Shigao and Kumārajīva. There was also the innovative Mahāyāna *biguan* teaching of Bodhidharma that instructed the practitioner to firmly abide in the principle of nondual True-nature (Ch. *zhenxing* 真性) and to further reinforce this understanding with the

[43] See Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 596b29-597a18. For a study of this particular history, see, *e.g.*, Jan, "Zhongguo zaoqi chanfa de liuchuan he tedian: Huijiao, Daoxuan suozhu xichan pian yanjiu 中國早期禪法的流傳和特點---慧皎、道宣所著「習禪篇」研究 (The Dissemination and Characteristics of Chinese Early Chan Teachings: A Study of the "Dhyāna Practice" Sections by Huijiao and Daoxuan)."

[44] The name, One-Vehicle Sect of South India, appears once in the biography of Fachong 法沖 (Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 666a3-666c24), where Daoxuan describes Fachong's study of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* from the disciples of Huike 慧可 (487-593), a disciple of Bodhidharma and the 2nd patriarch of the Chan School. Daoxuan reports that they "expounded [the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*] based on the [principle of] One-Vehicle Sect of South India (依南天竺一乘宗講之)" (Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 666b5-6).

Four Practices (Ch. *sixing* 四行) of daily living. Moreover, there was also the still-developing *ziguan* teaching of Tiantai that incorporated *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* with the Perfect Teaching of Tiantai (Ch. *tiantai yuanjiao* 天台圓教) expounded in the *Mohe zhiguan* 摩訶止觀 (*The Great Calming and Insight*) by Zhiyi.

Thirdly, even though *chan* teachings were diversified, some were prosperous while others were declining. For instance, the teachings of Sengchou and Sengshi declined drastically in the early years of Tang dynasty (c. early-7th century); the ascetic practices of Huizan that advocated a balanced training of the Three Studies had almost disappeared after the death of Huizan's major disciple Zhichao 志超 (571-641); and the *zhiguan* teachings of Tiantai gradually became part of the Tiantai School (Ch. *tiantai zong* 天台宗). Only the teachings of Bodhidharma, after Daoxin and Hongren's efforts, came to flourish among the Buddhist practitioners and eventually led to the establishment of the Chan School.

Fourthly, in the developments of these *chan* systems, due to their emphasis of transmission from the master to the disciple and for the purpose of assuring the continuation of their teachings, *chan* practitioners to an extent helped develop the production of sectarian texts. So, Sengchou wrote a text called *Zhiguan fa* 止觀法 (*Methods of Calming and Insight*), which unfortunately has been lost, and Bodhidharma wrote a treatise called *Erru sixing lun* 二入四行論 (*Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Practices*; hereafter the *Two Entrances and Four Practices*), which has been a constant inspiration for his later Chan descendents. Due to the practical nature of meditation training, I argue that these sectarian *chan* texts, in the minds of *chan*

contemplatives, would not only have the function of maintaining their own genealogies and teachings, but also serve as a reminder of their masters' oral instructions, thus facilitating a unique Chan understanding, namely, Chan has been passed on from the mind of the master to the mind of the disciple outside the doctrinal scriptures; more on this unique Chan development will be discussed later.

E. **Chan** ***in Early Tang: Clues from Daoxuan's Comments***

From the comments in the "Dhyāna Practice" section of Daoxuan's *Continued Biographies*, we can also get a glimpse of *chan* practices in the early 7th century of Tang dynasty. First, we can clearly see that Daoxuan's idea of *chan* teachings was in line with that of traditional Buddhists. That is to say, he considered *dhyāna* and *prajñā* to have their respective functions; in his *Continued Biographies*, he writes, "Detaching from the scattering is the function of concentration learning; seeing through the confusion is the work of realizing wisdom."[45] In this way, he firmly rooted his understanding of *dhyāna* and *prajñā* in the traditional context of the Three Studies. Consequently, he strongly praised the teachings of Sengchou and Huisi for they advocated either "easily understood" teachings or the teachings that required "one to extensively study the scriptures and familiarize the precepts so as to return to single-mindedness and control discursive thoughts."[46] Nevertheless, his comments on Bodhidharma's teachings at best can be said to have a mixed, if not critical, feeling. On the one hand, he praised that Bodhidharma's Mahāyāna *biguan* as "a supreme feat. Educated laymen flocked to pay

[45] Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 597b20;『離亂定學之功，見惑慧明之業。』
[46] Ibid, T. 50 (2060): 597b1-2;『博聽論經，明閑慧戒，然後歸神攝慮。』

him homage, as if it were a market day."[47] But on the other hand he also stated that Bodhidharma's "abstruse principle is hidden and impenetrable … [and because it is] hidden and impenetrable, … one cannot understand it by reasoning."[48] Thus, in Daoxuan's opinions, practitioners who could really grasp Bodhidharma's teachings were few.[49]

In several places, Daoxuan vehemently criticized some of his contemporary *chan* practitioners. In one place, he claimed that some *chan* practitioners did not spend enough effort on the study of the scriptures. They not only had not reflected upon what they had learned and thus deviated from the meaning of the definitive teaching (Skt. *nitartha*; Ch. *liaoyi jiao* 了義教; Tib. *nges don*). They also had made egoistic mistakes such as "indulging themselves in worldly concentration and considering it the practice of true emptiness [or *śūnyatā*]."[50] Daoxuan further pointed out that there were some practitioners who lived together in the mountains, but did not understand the precepts. Thus, they "used axes and knives, and did not avoid the work of farming; [they] prepared food, cooked, and ate leftovers without shame."[51] To a degree, this way of "*chan* living" can be said a prototype of the Chan forest monastery that became the standard in the later Chan School, but in the eyes of the Vinaya Master Daoxuan, it was a violation of the monastic codes set by the historical Buddha.

In another place, Daoxuan's criticisms seemed to be a warning against early sudden awakening teaching. He writes,

[47] Ibid, T. 50 (2060): 596c9;『大乘壁觀功業最高，在世學流歸仰如市。』
[48] Ibid, T. 50 (2060): 596c15-16;『玄旨幽賾 … 幽賾則理性難通。』
[49] Daoxuan writes, "But, [Bodhidharma's] words were difficult to understand. Those who could master [his teaching] were only a few (然而誦語難窮，厲精蓋少)" (Ibid, T. 50 (2060): 596c10).
[50] Ibid, T. 50 (2060): 597a24;『耽著世定，謂習真空。』
[51] Ibid, T. 50 (2060): 597b6-7;『運斤運刃，無避種生，炊爨飲啖，寧慚宿觸。』

> There were some practitioners who were hasty in nature and lax in practice; [they] did not befriend the wise and study the right sūtras. Upon hearing a teaching they called themselves the master and declared that the Five Abiding Afflictions had long been eradicated, the Ten Grounds had been realized, the Dharma-nature had already been seen, and the Buddha wisdom had already been obtained."[52]

Clearly, this description could be seen as a sudden awakening idea. But, for Daoxuan, these people were only "restricted by conditions to abide their minds and falsely speaking to have clarity and quietness."[53] They were "attaching [themselves] to the appearances and running their minds" to the degree that they "did not perceive the mind's movement" and "did not recognize scattering thoughts."[54] Even though they considered themselves *chan* practitioners, they actually did not know the real meaning of *chan.* As a result, not only did they bring upon themselves the contempt of orthodox Buddhists, but worldly people also considered these *chan* practitioners "ignorant old men."[55] Regarding this, Daoxuan was extremely sad. Therefore, he concluded the "Dhyāna Practice" section with a reminder to emphasize the importance of understanding *dhyāna* and *prajñā* properly, for Buddhist practitioners ought to have both to truly embrace the ultimate and the conventional.[56]

The above glimpse of *chan* practices in the early Tang provided by Daoxuan's comments can be revealing. Clearly, we see from Daoxuan's criticisms that a certain group or groups of *chan* practitioners, who perhaps could be called proto-Chan practitioners, were crossing boundaries on the doctrinal and practical planes; they only focused on meditation practice, they lived together and farmed to support themselves, and

[52] Ibid, T. 50 (2060): 597b7-10;『或有立性剛猛，志尚下流，善友莫尋，正經罕讀。暫聞一句，即謂司南，唱言五住久傾，十地將滿，法性早見，佛智已明。』
[53] Ibid, T. 50 (2060): 597b10;『約境住心，妄言澄靜。』
[54] Ibid, T. 50 (2060): 597b11-14;『附相轉心 … 不覺心移 … 不識亂念。』
[55] Ibid, T. 50 (2060): 597b16;『無知之叟』
[56] See Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 597b20-21.

they seemed to advocate a certain proto-sudden awakening teaching. On the condition that Daoxuan did not specify that they were the descendents of Bodhidharma, we can only conjecture that there were some indigenous *chan* practitioners who perhaps followed a form of *chan* teachings derived after the long-term transformations of Chinese *chan* or *dhyāna* teachings, even though it had not been well received by their contemporary Buddhists.

While they might not be the direct dharma heirs of Bodhidharma, these indigenous *chan* or proto-Chan contemplatives could still be members of Daoxin and Hongren's group,[57] as Daoxuan did not associate his contemporaries, Daoxin and Hongren,[58] with Bodhidharma's lineage directly. In any case, it is certainly true that, in the early Tang, there was Bodhidharma's profound Mahāyāna *biguan* teachings, and there was also the indigenous proto-Chan practices that resulted from the various transformations of Chinese *chan* teachings over a period of more than five centuries, which I have described in some detail above. Given these facts, I believe that the Chan School would be more properly characterized as a tradition gradually emerging out of the interaction between these two forces, a fruition of their mutual influence. In this way, my view of the formation of the Chan School can be said an integration of the tradition's view (*i.e.*, Chan as being brought to China by Bodhidharma) with modern scholars' conclusions (*i.e.*, Chan as a result from the sinicization of Buddhism).

[57] As mentioned earlier, the teaching and community established by Daoxin and Hongren is referred to as Dongshan Teaching (Ch. *dongshan famen* 東山法門 or East Mountain Teaching). For an introduction to this teaching and community, see, *e.g.*, McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, 30-43; 118-147 and Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 152-159.
[58] Their dates are as follows: Daoxuan: 596-667, Daoxin: 580-651, and Hongren: 601-674.

II. The Formation of Chan Buddhism: Locating Its Distinguishing Features

Doctrinally, the *chan* under the mutual influence of Chinese *dhyāna* teachings and Bodhidharma's Mahāyāna *biguan* or mind-nature (see below) teachings was not the traditional *dhyāna* anymore. That is to say, it has gone beyond its traditional function within the context of the Three Studies, in which *dhyāna* is the base and the method to give rise to *prajñā*. Correspondingly, under the said mutual influence, *chan* moved onto the path of becoming Chan. In the process, three intertwined features became evident to distinguish Chan as a school different from other Buddhist schools and characterize it as the special mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures, the tradition of sudden awakening via the direct seeing of one's true nature. Below let me try to account for the development of each of the three distinguishing features and associate them with our subject matter, *i.e.*, the logic of immediacy in contemplation.

A. From Innate Awakening to Chan as Buddha's Mind

Doctrinally and contemplatively, what was the source of inspiration for the earlier Chinese *dhyāna* monks to move *chan* out of the traditional Three-Studies context and present it as an approach of sudden awakening to Buddhahood? From the above historical description, we see that Chinese *chanfa* went through a transformation from being an approach to develop *samādhi* to being an approach to realize the truth of Buddhist reality when it was under the influence of Buddhist *prajñāpāramitā* and Daoist *xuanxue* teachings in the period of Wei and Jin dynasties. Thus, as early as the end of the 4th century and the beginning of the 5th century, contemplatives like Xie Fu had characterized Mahāyāna *dhyāna* practice as "attun[ing] the mind to traverse the profound reality." In addition, after reading the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, Daosheng was inspired to

propose the idea of "sudden awakening to achieve Buddhahood" (Ch. *dunwu chengfo* 頓悟成佛). Even though it was not accepted by most of his contemporaries, according to recent studies, Daosheng's idea of sudden awakening had influenced the subitism of the Northern Chan School particularly through the contemplative teachings expounded in the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* and the *Dasheng qixing lun.*[59]

As a matter of fact, following Buswell, I would argue that the *tathāgatagarbha* and *amalavijñāna* teachings taught in scriptures like the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* (translated around the mid-5th century) and the *Dasheng qixing lun* (translated around the mid-6th century) played the role of crucial catalyst for the emergence of Chan identity. In particular, its doctrine of original or innate awakening (Ch. *benjue* 本覺) inspired *chan* contemplatives to further innovate Mahāyāna meditation into an approach of directly realizing one's innately awakened nature. This innovation is clearly demonstrated in Buswell's study of Chan ideology, where he analyzes the teachings of the *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra* and contends that this "apocryphal" scripture can be "seen as an attempt [of certain *chan* adepts] to reveal the praxis aspects of tathāgatagarbha and amalavijñāna, transforming them from abstract philosophical theories into pragmatic tools of practice."[60]

Furthermore, these certain *chan* adepts, though like most of other Mahāyāna practitioners at the time, understood the innate awakening of *tathāgatagarbha* not only as a philosophical doctrine but also as a practically realizable soteriological goal. But, unlike

[59] According to various studies, Daosheng's sudden awakening is built upon gradual learning, that is, when ignorance (Ch. *mi* 迷) is gradually eradicated, sudden awakening can then be possible; see *e.g.*, Lai, "Tao-sheng's Theory of Sudden Enlightenment Re-examined" and Gong, "Cong Daosheng de dunwu xueshuo fengxi zaoqi chan de yuandun yu cidi guannian de youlai." Applying the idea of *family resemblance*, Gong argues that Daosheng's teaching had at least indirect impact on the subitist teaching of Northern Chan. For his arguments, see Gong, "Cong Daosheng de dunwu xueshuo fengxi zaoqi chan de yuandun yu cidi guannian de youlai," 241-245.

[60] Buswell, *The Formation of Ch'an Ideology in China and Korea*, 77.

other Mahāyāna practitioners, they also considered that this soteriological goal ought to be realized ***directly*** or ***im-mediately*** via contemplative practices. Consequently, as Buswell also writes, "The notion that enlightenment is immanent in the mundane world … ultimately fostered the evolution of new meditation techniques, such as no-thought, [in Chinese Buddhism, especially in the Chan School]."[61] These new meditation techniques had no direct analogues in Indian Buddhism, and more significantly, they went beyond the context of the Three Studies for the *chan* of these methods was not the *dhyāna* to accompany *prajñā* anymore, but the innately awakened mind (Skt. *bodhicitta*; Ch. *putixin* 菩提心; Tib. *byang chub kyi sems*) that enfolds all the Three Studies. In this unique expression, these pro-Chan adepts conceptually and practically turned *chan* into an approach of sudden awakening, which essentially qualified *chan* as an independent vehicle to Buddhahood, thus forming a school after it called Chan.

In this process of developing new meditation techniques to realize one's innate awakening, Bodhidharma's teaching was equally influential. Not only did Bodhidharma come to China when Chinese Buddhist practitioners were attempting to "reveal the praxis aspects of tathāgatagarbha and amalavijñāna," but he was also one of the Indian masters to advocate the *tathāgatagarbha* teaching.[62] According to Daoxuan's *Continued Biographies*, Bodhidharma transmitted to Huike the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* and told him, "I

[61] Ibid, 102.
[62] Even though some modern scholars have suggested that the connection between Bodhidharma and the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* was added later, I would argue that doctrinally the teaching of Buddha-nature is evident in the *Two Entrances and Four Practices* of Bodhidharma. Perhaps, it is dubious to "[make] an exclusive attachment on his [Bodhidharma's] part to a single sūtra, … especially any attachment to a particular translation of it" (Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 148). However, that is a non-issue for me, as I am arguing Bodhidharma's connection with the teaching of *tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha-nature mainly based on his teaching in the *Two Entrances and Four Practices*. That is to say, whether he was connected to the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* does not prevent me from putting my arguments forward. For a more detailed discussion on Bodhidharma's connection with the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, see Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, Chapter 6.

have observed China. Only this sutra is [suitable]. If you follow it, you can certainly help the world."[63] The fact that Bodhidharma expounded the teaching of *tathāgatagarbha* can also be seen from his *Two Entrances and Four Practices*. In it, Bodhidharma clearly stated that all beings, both the ordinary and the enlightened, possess the same True-nature that is evidently another name for the *tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha-nature.[64]

More importantly, Bodhidharma taught the method of *ningzhu biguan* 凝住壁觀 or "firmly abiding in wall-contemplation" to enter this True-nature. While *biguan* can be literally interpreted as meditating in front of a wall, Daoxuan's description of Bodhidharma's teaching that "thus setting the mind at ease is called *biguan*"[65] indicates the possibility of interpreting *biguan* as "an immediate recognition of the 'True Nature' itself," which has been argued by various scholars recently.[66] According to Bodhidharma's *Two Entrances and Four Practices* where he presents the idea of *biguan* or "wall-contemplation," one can certainly understand how this interpretation comes about:

> Let one discard the false and return to the True, [thus] *firmly abiding in wall-contemplation*; there is neither self nor other; the ordinary and the enlightened are one and the same. Firmly abide [in here] without wavering and never [again] follow after other teaching. This is in deep accordance with the Way, [without conceptualization,] serenely without [any] doing. This is called entering [the Way] via principle

[63] Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 552b21-22;『我觀漢地，惟有此經。仁者依行，自得度世。』
[64] There exist various versions of Bodhidharma's *Two Entrances and Four Practices*, some shorter and some longer. For consistency, I have used the one in Daoxuan's *Continued Biographies*, T. 50 (2060): 551c07-23. For a more critically edited recension, see Yanagida, *Daruma no goroku: Ninyū shigyō roku* 達摩の語録: 二入四行論 (*The Recorded Sayings of Bodhidharma: The Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Practices*). For an English translation, see *e.g.*, McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, 102-105.
[65] Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 551c5-6;『如是安心，謂壁觀也。』
[66] In fact, this characterization of *biquan* as "an immediate recognition of the 'True Nature' itself" is Carmen Meinert's; see Meinert, "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs-chen*," 295. In addition, Adamek characterizes *biquan* as "an embodiment of the realization of the principle of nondual true nature" (Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 141). For other interpretations, see McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, 112-115.

(emphasis added).[67]

From the above passage, evidently, it is to discard the false and return to the True that one firmly abides in *biguan*. Here *biguan* has nothing to do with sitting in front of a wall, but it is to return to one's True-nature so that one is in deep accordance with the Way, and this is taught by Bodhidharma as entering the Way of Buddhahood via the principle of the teaching (Ch. *jiejiao wuzong* 藉教悟宗). This interpretation is also supported by the Tibetan translation of *biguan*. In the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (*The Lamp for the Eye of Dhyāna*), a 10th-century Tibetan text written by Dzogchen Master gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes,[68] the Chinese term *ningzhu biguan* is rendered into Tibetan as *lham mer gnas* or "abiding in luminosity," in which one "rest[s] in the naturalness of the True Meaning [*i.e.*, one's awakened nature], without conceptualization, at peace without action."[69]

Thus, Bodhidharma's *biguan* is to set the mind at ease by discarding false conceptualization and returning immediately to one's True-nature which is one's immanently awakened mind. In this way, Bodhidharma's *chan-teaching* (Ch. *chanjiao*

[67] Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 551c9-12;『令捨偽歸真，凝住壁觀。無自無他，凡聖等一，堅住不移，不隨他教。與道冥符，[無有分別]，寂然無為，名理入也。』

[68] For a more detailed discussion of the text and its author, see Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

[69] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 57.6-58.2. For comparison, below is the translation of the quoted *Two Entrances and Four Practices* passage from the *bSam gtan mig sgron*: "Having abandoned the conceptualization and returned to the True, if one abides in luminosity (*lham mer gnas*), there is neither self nor other; the ordinary and the noble are one and the same. If one abides [in it] steadily without change, from then on one does not pursue after the words and teachings. This is to rest in the naturalness of the True Meaning, without conceptualization, at peace without action. This is Entering to the Meaning (yang dag pa la phyogs zhing rtog* pa spangs te/ lham mer gnas na/ bdag kyang med gshan yang med/ ma rabs dang 'phags pa mnyam shing gcig ste/ mi 'gyur bar brtan par gnas na/ de phan chad yi ge dang bstan pa'i rjes su mi 'brang ngo/ 'di ni yang dag pa'i don gyi rnal du phab pa rnam par rtog pa med pa/ zhi** zhing bya ba med pa ste/ de ni don la 'jug*** pa'o)" (gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 57.6-58.2); * the original has *rtogs pa*, but from the context, it should be *rtog pa*; ** the original has *zhing*, but from the context, it has been changed to *zhi*; *** the original reads *mi 'jug*, but from the context, it does not make any sense to have the negation. Thus, the negation *mi* has been taken out of the final translation.

禪教) is not the *dhyāna* traditional Buddhists had recognized, but an epistemological insight into the immanence of one's awakened mind, the *tathāgatagarbha*, that ultimately warrants his *dhyāna* to attaining the fruition of sudden awakening via the direct seeing of one's True-nature. According to Daoxuan, at the time the entire nation had been greatly preoccupied by producing exegeses of Buddhist scriptures, thus people often slandered Bodhidharma upon hearing his *dingfa* 定法 or "teaching of concentration."[70] Even though Bodhidharma's new teaching was not completely accepted by contemporary Buddhists,[71] his *chan-teaching* certainly was passed on to his disciples including Sengfu 僧副 (464-524) and Huike 慧可 (487-593).[72]

Historically, Huike, revered as the second patriarch of the Chan School, was still being persecuted and his teaching was dismissed as "devil's speech" (Ch. *moyu* 魔語),[73] nonetheless, he survived these hardships by living among the common people and composing folk songs to propagate his *chan* ideas.[74] It seems that in these early years of Chan's dissemination, early or proto-Chan practitioners were trying to find ways to mediate the tensions between traditional Buddhist views and their innovative teachings.

[70] Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 551c1-2;『于時合國盛弘講授，乍聞定法多生譏謗。』

[71] The fact that Bodhidharma was not completely accepted by his contemporary practitioners may be further supported by the alleged incidents given in some of the early Chan histories, in which various monks were trying to kill Bodhidharma by poisoning; see, *e.g.*, Du Fei's 杜朏 (c. 7th-8th centuries) *Chuan fabao ji* 傳法寶紀 (*Annals of the Transmission of the Dharma-Jewel*) that was completed around the year of 713 and Baotang school's 保唐宗 *Lidai fabao ji* 歷代法寶記 (*Record of the Dharma-Jewel Through the Generations*) that was completed around the year of 780. The *Chuan fabao ji* can be found in Yanagida, *Shoki zenshū shisho no kenkyū* 初期禅宗史書の研究 (*A Study of Early Chan Historiographical Texts*), 560-572, and a brief introduction of the text can be found in McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, 86-88. For the *Lidai fabao ji*, it has been studied extensively by Wendi Adamek; see Adamek 2007, *The Mystique of Transmission*. For the account of the poisoning incidents, see her translation in Section 4 (Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 310-313).

[72] For an introduction to Senfu's and Huike's lives, see, *e.g.*, McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, 19-23.

[73] This description is given in Huike's biography of Daoxuan's *Continued Biographies*, which can be found in Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 551c27-552c1.

[74] Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 552a23-24;『縱容順俗，時惠精猷，乍托吟謠。』

In this sense, unlike Faure's understanding that "the 'will to orthodoxy' … characterizes all of early Chan,"[75] I would argue, on the doctrinal front, mediating the tensions between traditional Buddhist and innovative Chan teachings characterizes the development of early Chan. This marginal status of early Chan was still existent even after Daoxin (580-651) and Hongren (601-674), the fourth and fifth patriarch of the tradition, established probably the first Chan community in Huangmei 黃梅.[76] Although Shenxiu (606?-706), one of Hongren's ten great disciples, brought Chan to the national stage, according to Mario Poceski, it was not until Mazu 馬祖 (709-788) and his followers who finally integrated Chan into the Buddhist mainstream and reinforced its distinct identity.[77]

In this long history of mediating their distinct identity, Chan masters have taught various contemplative techniques to realize one's awakened mind. In addition to Bodhidharma's *biguan* briefly introduced earlier, these techniques include Daoxin's *shouyi* 守一 or "guarding the one,"[78] Hongren's *shouxin* 守心 or "guarding the mind,"

[75] Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 4.

[76] Nowadays, Huangmei 黃梅 is a county in the very eastern part of the Chinese province of Hubei 湖北, where it also meets the provinces of Anhui 安徽 and Jiangxi 江西.

[77] In his *Ordinary Mind as the Way*, Mario Poceski argues that, contrary to the traditional view as a revolutionary movement that rejected mainstream mores and teachings, the Hongzhou Sect 洪州宗 succeeded largely because of its ability to mediate tensions between traditionalist and iconoclastic Chan tendencies; Poceski writes, "In their unifying and stabilizing roles, Mazu and his followers furthered the integration of Chan into the Buddhist mainstream, even as, paradoxically, they also reinforced their tradition's distinct identity. They presented an inclusive and expansive version of Chan as a tradition within Buddhism, putting forward their teachings as the essence of Buddhist spirituality. As a result, they nudged the Chan school toward a central course, away from antinomian extremes such as those of the Baotang school in Sichuan or the divisive sectarianism epitomized by Shenhui's (684-758) acrimonious campaigns against the Northern school. In that sense, the rise of the Hongzhou school represented a consolidation and maturation of the Chan movement, a culmination of its evolution during the Tang period" (5-6). Following this, Poceski continues, "*The Hongzhou school's successful growth was largely predicated on its ability to mediate tensions arising from its engagement with established teachings and traditions.* This is to say, its success in becoming the dominant tradition of Chan depended primarily on its capacity to balance adherence to established norms and ideals, on the one hand, with the need to forge an identity by selecting and reformulating aspects of received traditions on the other" (6; emphasis added).

[78] As the idea of *shouyi* or "guarding the one" originates from Daoism, for a discussion of the Daoist

Shenxiu's *kanxin* 看心 or "viewing the mind," Huineng and Shenhui's *wunian* 無念 or "no-thought," and Mazu's *pingchang xin* 平常心 or "ordinary mind," to name just a few.[79] Even though they have some nuanced differences, these methods all have one common feature, namely, an immediate recognition of one's innately awakened mind and the realization of this awakened mind in constant contemplation or in spontaneous presence. As a result, the Chan School has come to be epitomized by the adage, "Chan is Buddha's mind."[80]

As Buddha's mind, Chan certainly goes beyond the *chan* derived from *dhyāna*. In fact, it essentially embraces all that Buddhist teachings have entailed. Hence, regarding the Three Studies, Huineng teaches, "The mind that has no transgression is the *śīla* of Self-nature; the mind that has no agitation is the *samādhi* of Self-nature; the mind that has no ignorance is the *prajñā* of Self-nature."[81] Similarly, Shenhui teaches, "That the deluded mind is not being activated is *śīla*. That one has no deluded mind is *samādhi*. That one knows the mind has no delusion is *prajñā*."[82] In this way, Chan, as Buddha's mind, embraces all the Three Studies, and moreover, according to John McRae's study, the Northern Sect has used the device of *guanxin shi* 觀心釋 (or "symbolic exegesis of the mind") to turn all of Buddhist teachings "into an allegory for the practice of the

practice of "guarding the one," see, *e.g.*, Kohn, "Guarding the One."

[79] For Daoxin's *shouyi* and Hongren's *shouxin*, see, *e.g.*, McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, Chapter VI, particularly 136-138 and 140-144; also Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 70-72. For Shenxiu's *kanxin* or *guanxin* 觀心, see, *e.g.*, McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, Chapter VII, particularly 215-218; also Fause, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 58ff. For Shenhui's *wunian*, see Chapter 2 of this dissertation. For Mazu's *pingchang xin*, see Poceski, *Ordinary Mind as the Way*, 182-186.

[80] 『禪者佛之心。』

[81] *Liuzu tanjing*, T. 48(2007): 342b25-27;『心地無非是自性戒，心地無亂是自性定，心地無癡是自性慧。』

[82] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji* 神會和尚遺集 (*A Collection of Monk Shenhui's Writings*), 229;『妄心不起名為戒，無妄心名為定，知心無妄名為慧。』

'contemplation of the mind'."[83]

In the contemplation, or more precisely manifestation, of the awakened mind, Chan, as Buddha's mind, is both the path (*i.e.*, as an approach to the direct seeing of one's awakened mind) and the fruition (*i.e.*, as the Buddha or awakened mind). From the above discussion, this unique expression of Chan is the result obtained from the efforts of many *chan* contemplatives over a long period of time, in which Chinese *dhyāna* monks' contemplative understanding of *tathāgatagarbha* and Bodhidharma's mind-nature contemplation have categorically set up the doctrinal parameters of this expression. In the above origin narrative that gives rise to this Chan expression, I believe that the various interactions and transformations described not only provide a historical context or grounding for the emergence of the logic of immediacy in contemplation. They also demonstrate the basic philosophical principles, most notably, the innateness and the all-pervasiveness of the awakened mind, that warrant the possibility of sudden awakening. To better understand how these philosophical principles warrant this idea of immediacy, in the next chapters I will delve into the teachings of Chan and Dzogchen to perform the intended task.

B. From Training in Religious Settings to Realization in Spontaneous Living

Closely related to the above doctrinal parameters, another connection, which is related to practice style, has also contributed to the formation and even consolidation of the Chan School.[84] As described in the historical section, early *chan* monks either

[83] McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, 198.
[84] Here, I am reminded of the formation and consolidation of Mahāyāna Buddhism. As various scholars have argued, the formation of the Mahāyāna owed much to a reformist request of a different life style within the monastic context, namely, "a reactionary critique of sedentary monasticism in favor of a return to wilderness dwelling" (Boucher, *Bodhisattvas of the Forest and the Formation of the Mahāyāna*, xxi); for

gathered together to form a group in the mountains or lived by themselves in their huts to practice. Due to the wars in the period of South-North dynasties (439-581), the number of mendicant monks and nuns increased drastically and most of them became *chan* practitioners. Because of their living styles, among these mendicant contemplatives a *chan* living that emphasized meditation practice and sūtra recitation gradually developed. I believe that it was due to the influence of this kind of *chan* living that, by the time when Daoxuan was writing his *Continued Biographies*, some *chan* practitioners had lived together and "used axes and knives, … farm[ed], … prepared food, cooked, and ate leftovers without shame."

Essentially, Daoxuan's criticisms of the life style described are, as we noted above, derived from the Vinaya's perspective. In the Vinaya, it is said that monks and nuns should avoid the use of any tools for killing. They should also avoid the work of farming in order to prevent themselves from accidentally killing small insects or worms. As for food, they should beg enough alms just for a day. Thus, there should be no leftovers. Therefore, it is naturally understandable that Daoxuan, a Vinaya master, would criticize the violation of these Vinaya rules by using axes and knives, farming, and eating leftovers.

Yet, why did those *chan* practitioners violate the Vinaya rules? Did they, as Daoxuan suggested, simply not know the precepts? While it is certainly believable that some of the mendicants who were displaced and uneducated common people did not probably study the Vinaya, there were also educated practitioners among these *chan* contemplatives who had chosen this style of *chan* living to practice the dharma. Then, the

his detailed argument and other related arguments and references, see Boucher, *Bodhisattvas of the Forest and the Formation of the Mahāyāna*, 40-43; 64-84.

question becomes: Why did they choose a living style that would bring them criticism and controversy?

While it is impossible to understand their exact reasons due to the lack of information, it seems that there are clues left to argue a possible case, in which these practitioners, out of their contemplative concerns, were trying to integrate the precepts as well as other aspects of Buddhist practice into the realization of one's Buddha-nature (or innately awakened mind) in daily living. In the process of this contemplative integration, social reality was also taken into consideration. That is, during the chaos of wartime, when begging for alms was not possible and patronage from the government and/or the laity was considerably reduced, the option of farming would possibly became a necessity, which in turn required the use of axes and knives, cooking, and so forth.

So, what were the clues for this possible case? First, as discussed in the previous subsection, proto-Chan contemplatives taught the teaching of directly realizing one's awakened mind as the soteriological goal. As the awakened mind, noted above, pervades everything and consolidates all teachings, when one realizes this awakened mind, one realizes everything, including the Vinaya precepts, thus giving rise to ideas such as one-mind precepts (Ch. *yixin jie* 一心戒), formless precepts (Ch. *wuxiang jie* 無相戒) or Buddha-nature precepts (Ch. *foxing jie* 佛性戒).[85] Probably, it was also due to this understanding that when Huike expounded the essence of Bodhidharma's mind teaching, "those who were stuck with the literal meanings criticized [him] vehemently."[86] Yet, the

[85] In Chan, these ideas can been found in the teachings of the Northern Sect, Huineng's *Platform Sūtra*, and the Baotang Sect 保唐宗, to name just a few. For a study on the one-mind precepts in Chan, see *e.g.*, Faure, "The Concept of One-Practice Samādhi in Early Ch'an," 116-117. For a study on the Buddha-nature precepts and formless precepts in Chan, see, *e.g.*, Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 111; 113-118 and Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 197-204.
[86] Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 552a12;『滯文之徒，是非紛舉。』

understanding that the awakened mind pervades all went deeply in the minds of early Chan practitioners. Huiman 慧滿 (c. 6th-7th centuries), a grand-disciple of Huike, emphasized,

> All Buddhas speak the mind, letting [the practitioner] know that the appearances of the mind are delusory phenomena. Nowadays, [some] have reinforced [the attachment to] the appearances of the mind, which not only deeply goes against the intention of the Buddhas but also increases disputation. That is in extreme contradiction with the Great Principle.[87]

Even though we are not sure what or who Huiman was referring to as reinforcing one's attachment to the appearances of the mind, his living style as a mendicant monk for most part of his life suggests that he might follow the precepts informed by "their spirits" that underscore the inner quality of the practitioner's realization, rather than confined by "their appearances" that only require the outer accordance of the practitioner's physical behaviors. That is to say, for Huiman, in the spirit of one-mind precepts and formless precepts, to emphasize the holding-up of the precepts only by their outer accordance with the practitioner's physical behaviors "deeply goes against the intention of the Buddhas" and "is in extreme contradiction with the Great Principle," for it only reinforces one's attachment to the appearances without realizing the nature of one's awakened mind.

Practically, to live up to the precepts by "their spirits" is to enact them in one's daily living, rather than just practicing them in their religious settings. Essentially, this is equivalent to realizing one's awakened mind through one's everyday actions. Thus, in his *Two Entrances and Four Practices*, after stating the teaching of entering the Way via principle, Bodhidharma also gives the teaching of entering the Way via practice (Ch.

[87] Ibid: 552c19-21;『諸佛說心，令知心相是虛妄法。今乃重加心相，深違佛意，又增論議，殊乖大理。』

xingru 行入). Here the Chinese term *xing* 行 (translated as practice) is really in the sense of applying the teaching to one's daily actions. Thus, the Four Practices (Ch. *sixing* 四行) in the *xingru* can be read as Bodhidharma's instructions to his disciples on how to live one's everyday life according to the dharma so that one can enter the Way of Buddhahood (or realize one's awakened mind) via these practices.

For Bodhidharma, these four methods of daily practice in the *xingru* embrace all other practices.[88] While each practice has its own aspect of emphasis, their ultimate goal is to lead the practitioner to live in accord with the dharma and ultimately realize one's True-nature, the awakened mind, through one's moment-by-moment actions, hence the name entering the Way of Buddhahood via practice. Although in his teaching Bodhidharma does not specify the connection between the Four Practices and the Vinaya, the fact is that the Four Practices, in their essence, require Chan practitioners to integrate the outer accordance of their precepts upholding with the inner quality of their realization, for the upholding of the Vinaya should be a natural part of their everyday life. As a continuation, early Chan masters further developed ideas such as one-mind precepts, Buddha-nature precepts, or formless precepts briefly mentioned earlier to consolidate the Vinaya into their contemplative practices. However, when the idea of "formless precepts" was reinforced with the social reality of food shortages due to the war, the work of farming naturally became their choice, and from farming, using axes, cooking, and eating

[88] In his *Two Entrances and Four Practices*, Bodhidharma writes, "Entering [the Way] via practice [refers to] Four Practices that encompass all other myriad practices (行入四行，萬行同攝)" (Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 551c12). These Four Practices are (1) the practice of the retribution of enmity (Ch. *baoyuan xing* 報冤行), (2) the practice of adapting to conditional arising (Ch. *suiyuan xing* 隨緣行), (3) the practice of the absence of craving (Ch. *wusuoqiu xing* 無所求行), and (4) the practice of accordance with the dharma (Ch. *chengfa xing* 稱法行). For a discussion on the meaning of these four practices, see *e.g.*, McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, 108-110.

leftovers would naturally follow.[89]

The need for early Chan monastic members to work for sustenance can be seen in the life story of Daoxin as well. In the early Chan history of *Chuan fabao ji* 傳法寶紀 (*Annals of the Transmission of the Dharma-Jewel*),[90] it is said that Daoxin used to urge his disciples:

> Make effort to diligently sit [*i.e.*, meditate]. Sitting is the root. Work for three or five years and *obtain food to cure the disease of hunger*. One should then sit [behind] the closed door. Do not read sūtras. Do not speak to people. (Emphasis added).[91]

Thus, in Daoxin's time, proto-Chan practitioners were practicing meditation while working to sustain themselves. By Hongren's time, this practice of working and sitting seemed to be a standard as the author of *Chuan fabao ji* described Hongren as having "often worked hard in labor so as to show his consideration to the serving laborers"[92] and blending himself in the ones who do "life-sustaining work in the daytime and sit in concentration until dawn in the night."[93] In another early history of the Chan School, *Lengqie shizi ji* 楞伽師資記 (*Record of the Masters and Disciples of the*

[89] As a matter of fact, historically speaking, since the early years of Chinese Buddhism, Chinese monasteries had been given land by the government as their source of income. Originally, local farmers would be farming the land. On the one hand, local farmers earned their living, whereas on the other hand the monasteries would then be supported. Yet, during wartime when people were either summoned by the government to fight the war or displaced because of its turmoil, due to the shortage of manpower, it was natural for the monks to start to farm the land themselves if they could go beyond the bondage from the Vinaya rules. For a more detailed discussion on the economy of the Buddhist monastery in China, see *e.g.*, Gernet, *Buddhism in Chinese Society: An Economic History from the Fifth to the Tenth Centuries*, 94-141.

[90] The *Chuan fabao ji* by Du Fei 杜朏 (c. 7th-8th centuries) was completed around the year of 713. A version of the text can be found in Yanagida, *Shoki zenshū shisho no kenkyū* 初期禅宗史書の研究 (*A Study of Early Chan Historiographical Texts*), 560-572, and a brief introduction of the text can be found in McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, 86-88.

[91] Yanagida, *Shoki zenshū shisho no kenkyū*, 566;『努力勤坐，坐為根本。能作三五年，得一口食療飢瘡，即閉門坐，莫讀經，莫共人語。』

[92] Ibid, 567;『常勤作役，以體下人。』

[93] Ibid, 567;『晝則混跡驅給，夜便坐攝至曉。』

Laṅkā[vatāra-sūtra]),[94] it is said that Hongren was able to manage the monastic labor work so that all the practitioners could be sustained.[95]

Evidently, the Chan essence of the above Simultaneous Practice of Sitting and Working (Ch. *zuozuo bingzhong* 坐作並重) was expanded to every action in life. As the author of *Lengqie shizi ji* described Hongren to have taught, "The four gestures [*i.e.*, walking, standing, sitting, and reclining] all are the places of the Way. The three actions [*i.e.*, the actions of one's body, speech, and mind] all are the activities of the Buddha. Because stillness and motion are of nonduality; speech and silence are in constant oneness."[96] In this way, Bodhidharma's teaching of entering the Way via the practices was indeed implemented in the daily living of early Chan communities.

To be sure, Hongren's understanding of entering the Way of Buddhahood via one's ordinary actions of everyday life clearly was not only due to social realistic demands. Rather, I would argue that it was most probably due to his understanding of the teachings in a unique Chan fashion. In short, this Chan understanding is that ***as every action is a manifestation of one's awakened mind, it is naturally possible for one to realize the awakened mind through one's everyday ordinary actions.*** Thus, in effect, this interpretation provides, on the one hand, an implementation of realizing one's awakened mind in its spontaneous presence and, on the other hand, an extension of realizing one's awakened mind from being confined within religious trainings to every action of one's doing. Seen from this contemplative perspective, the development of the Chan School in its early years can be considered as trying to extend the realization of one's awakened

[94] A version of *Lengqie shizi ji* can be found in T. 85 (2837): 1283a-1290c. For a study on the author and textual tradition of *Lengqie shizi ji*, see Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, Chapter 5 and Chapter 7.
[95] Jingjue 淨覺 (683-750?), *Lengqie shizi ji*, T. 85 (2837): 1289b26-27;『役力以申供養，法侶資其足焉。』
[96] Ibid, T. 85 (2837): 1289b28-29;『四儀皆是道場，三業咸為佛事。蓋靜亂之無二，乃語默之恒一。』

mind not only through one's religious trainings but also through the *spontaneous presence* of the awakened mind in *daily living*, or put another way, one's spontaneous living.[97]

That is to say, from Bodhidharma's Four Practices to Daoxin and Hongren's Simultaneous Practice of Sitting and Working; and to later Huineng's Practice of No Thought (Ch. *wunian xing* 無念行), Mazu's Ordinary Mind as the Way (Ch. *pingchang xin shi dao* 平常心是道), and later Chan masters' shouting, striking, facial gesturing, and so forth; contemplatively, I argue, these Chan practices can be seen as forming a unique evolving feature of realizing one's awakened mind through one's daily ordinary actions or spontaneous living. Accordingly, this evolving feature has given rise to the famous adage that "Walking, standing, sitting, and reclining all are Chan."[98] Here, not only have the four classic postures of Indian Buddhism been transformed from their usual mindfulness context[99] to the manifestations of the awakened mind, but the Chan in the adage is clearly not the *dhyāna* of the Three Studies it originally comes from; rather, this Chan is the spontaneous living inspired and actualized by one's awakened mind.

Thus, similar to Chan as Buddha's mind, Chan, as spontaneous living, is both the fruition (for spontaneity is a hallmark of Buddhahood) as well as the path Chan contemplatives artfully strive for. Even though the formation of this distinguishing feature had caused some controversy noted above, this fact only further testifies to my above argument that mediating the tensions between traditional Buddhist and innovative

[97] In this practice of spontaneous living, there are no exhortations to do this or not to do that. The Chan practitioners simply act according to need and respond as spoken to. Such a spontaneous living is the fruition as well as the path its practitioners artfully strive for.
[98] 『行住坐臥皆是禪。』
[99] That is to say, traditionally, the four postures are considered as the places where Buddhist practitioners train their mindfulness; see, *e.g.*, Thera, *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*, 63-64 and Anālayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna*, 136ff.

Chan teachings characterizes the formation of Chan identity. In addition, in this process of mediation, what Chan adepts had developed under the mutual influence of Chinese and Indian contemplative teachings not only further consolidated Chan as an independent school, but also demonstrates another historical context for the appearance of the logic of immediacy in contemplation. As such, Chan as spontaneous living informs us about another important philosophical principle, namely, spontaneity, for the realization of sudden awakening in contemplation. In the chapters that follow, the various aspects between spontaneity and immediacy will be further explored through the teachings of Chan and Dzogchen.

C. From Oral Instructions to a Special Transmission Outside the Scriptures

Intertwined with the aforementioned two features, *i.e.*, Chan as Buddha's mind and Chan as spontaneous living, existed another distinguishing feature of genealogical development for the appearance of Chan identity. As described in the historical section, even before the formation of the Chan School, various *chan* groups were already existent. These *chan* groups had their own lineages, for the idea that "without a master, [one] will never be able to realize the Way" had been prevalent among the *chan* monks since the 4th century onwards. Thus, they sought qualified teachers. As described earlier, in the process, genealogies came to be formed and sectarian manuscripts came to be written. By the time of early Tang, Bodhidharma's system had already obtained the name of One-Vehicle Sect of South India.

The emphasis on genealogy first came because of the hands-on nature of *dhyāna* practice. Written words alone could not pass on experience and satisfactorily answer questions arisen from practitioners' experiential circumstances. Hence, they needed oral

instructions to help them to deal with these experiential issues. As oral instructions being written down, *dhyāna* practice manuals came to become important companions to the practitioners to keep their practices going. Be that as it may, the importance of finding a master could have never been replaced. Thus, for *dhyāna* practice, a master's oral instructions would always be more important than the written words.

I would argue that the importance of a master's oral instructions among Chinese Buddhist contemplatives reached its apex when the practice of realizing one's awakened mind came to be expressed in a unique Chan fashion, not only because of its novelty but also because of its abstruse meaning. Daoxuan's description of Bodhidharma's teaching could shed some light here; he writes,

> [Bodhidhar]ma's teaching follows the principle of emptiness; its abstruse principle is hidden and impenetrable … [because it is] hidden and impenetrable, so one cannot understand it by reasoning.[100]

As Bodhidharma's mind-nature teaching cannot be understood by reasoning alone, one needed to not only practice it oneself but also be guided in the process so as to achieve its goal. This personal guidance, I believe, would not only reinforce the importance of genealogical transmission but also foster the awareness of "a mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures"[101] for it was the master or patriarch who passed on the teaching and gave quintessential instructions to continue the transmission of the lineage. Thus, as early as the end of the 7th century, early Chan practitioners already had the idea that "those who enter this [Chan] tradition only pass on the transmission through the minds [of masters and disciples]."[102]

[100] Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T. 50 (2060): 596c15-16;『摩法虛宗，玄旨幽賾 … 幽賾則理性難通。』

[101] 『以心印心，教外別傳。』

[102] Yanagida, *Shoki zenshū shisho no kenkyū*, 487;『入此門者，唯意相傳。』 The statement is taken from

The importance of passing on the transmission through the minds of masters and disciples has also been recognized in another early Chan history, *Chuan fabao ji*, where it is said, "If one does not realize the unsurpassable vehicle which is passed on through the minds [of masters and disciples], how can one really enter the true suchness?"[103] So, in this way, this understanding was further developed in later Chan literature, where we see statements like, "It [*i.e.*, Chan] is called a special transmission outside the scriptures, [for] it only transmits the mind seal [by] pointing at one's mind [so as to lead one to] see [into one's] nature and become a Buddha"[104]; or "The mind seal of all the Buddhas has been passed on from one patriarch to the next patriarch. It is called a special transmission outside the scriptures for it only takes *this* most superb quintessence."[105]

However, the question is: How do we understand this mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures in the Chan tradition? Put another way, how can a transmission be passed on from one mind to another? Here, Robert Sharf's research on the notion of "sympathetic resonance" (Ch. *ganying* 感應 or *xiangying* 相應) in Chinese cosmology can bring us some enlightening clarity.[106] Since sympathetic resonance means "objects belonging to the same category or class spontaneously resonate with each other just as do two identically tuned strings on a pair of zithers,"[107] the mind-to-mind transmission

the *Tang zhongyue shamen shi faru chanshi xingzhuang* 唐中岳沙門釋法如禪師行狀 (*Epitaph for the Tang [Dynasty] Śramaṇna of the Central Peak, Dhyāna Master Shi Faru*). The epitaph was written for Dhyāna Master Faru 法如 (638-689), a disciple of the fifth patriarch Hongren. According to modern studies, it is one of the earliest documents that record the genealogy of the Chan School. For an introduction to the epitaph, see, *e.g.*, Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 161 and McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, 85-86.

103 Yanagida, *Shoki zenshū shisho no kenkyū*, 561;『若非得無上乘傳乎心地，其孰能入真境界者哉。』

104 Yuanwu Keqin 圓悟克勤 (1063-1135), *Biyan lu* 碧巖錄 (*Blue Cliff Record*), T. 48 (2003): 154c4-5;『謂之教外別傳，單傳心印，直指人心，見性成佛。』

105 Ze Zangzhu 賾藏主 (c. 12th century), *Gu zunsu yulu* 古尊宿語錄 (*Recorded Sayings of Ancient Venerable Elders*), X. 68 (1315): 284c13-14;『諸佛心印，祖祖傳授，所謂教外別傳者，蓋取其要妙也。』

106 See Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 82-88.

107 Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 83.

between masters and disciples can thus be possible precisely because they share the same awakening nature, which, in effect, places them to the same category.[108] As a result, the master's stimulus can bring about the disciple's response, thus effecting a mind-to-mind transmission that is outside the scriptures.[109]

Doctrinally and contemplatively, several other reasons also had contributed to the almost inevitable awareness of a mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures for the Chan School. First, because the principle of Bodhidharma's mind-nature teaching, *i.e.*, the quintessence of one's awakened mind, is hidden and impenetrable, Chan contemplatives could not understand it by reasoning. Therefore, it is only with the help of the master's stimulus that the disciple grasps it with sympathetic resonance, thus effecting the special mind-to-mind Chan transmission outside the scriptures.[110] In addition, because the realization of one's awakened mind transcends words and letters, the master takes recourse to daily living so that the disciple realizes its ineffable essence through the liveliness of living, thus also effecting the special mind-to-mind Chan transmission outside the scriptures. Furthermore, spontaneity is devoid of discursive thoughts. As a result, the master employs various spontaneous skills in means, such as shouting, striking, or facial gesturing, to stimulate the disciple to come to the realization of his awakened mind in the context of daily living, thus effecting the special

[108] This idea of sympathetic resonance certainly is not limited to the Chinese. Similar ideas can be found, for example, in the Indic idea of "Seal of Śambhu." For a discussion on the Indic idea of "Seal of Śambhu," see, *e.g.*, Muller-Ortega, "On the Seal of Śambhu."

[109] As Sharf has noticed, Zongmi also employed this idea of sympathetic resonance to account for the patriarchal succession in Chan; see Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 131-132.

[110] Indeed, this principle of a mind-to-mind transmission between the master and the disciple is essentially the same as that of a tantric initiation where the master initiates the disciple into the tradition with the stimulus of the master and the resonance of the disciple; for a discussion on the various meanings of initiation in the tantric context, see, *e.g.*, Jeffrey Hopkins's introduction to Dalai Lama's *Kālachakra Tantra: Rite of Initiation*, 66-91 and for a procedure of tantric initiations, see, *e.g.*, Hopkins's introduction to Dalai Lama's *Kālachakra Tantra: Rite of Initiation*, 101-130.

mind-to-mind Chan transmission outside the scriptures as well. Given this understanding, it is easier to see why, in his *Chuan fabao ji*, Du Fei (c. 7th-8th centuries) writes, "Ever since Bodhidharma, regarding demonstrating the Way, the masters have all used various skillful means to [lead the disciples] to realize the mind. They have spoken according to conditions without bonding [themselves] to fixed doctrines."[111] In this way, intertwined with the two distinguishing features of Chan as Buddha's mind and Chan as spontaneous living discussed above, Chan also came to be the tradition that does not rely on written words but embodies the mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures.

Historically, the special transmission through the minds of Chan adepts has been expressed in the form of Chan patriarchal genealogies.[112] This historical expression evidently consolidated Chan practitioners together as an independent group and contributed to the establishment of a unique Chan identity that led to the establishment of the Chan School in Chinese Buddhism. In the process of this establishment, Chan as a special mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures emphasized uncompromisingly the indispensability of a master's oral instructions to the practice of the disciple. This emphasis further brought about other distinguishing features of the Chan School, such as the prevalence of patriarchs' *yulu* 語錄 or "recorded sayings" and the practice of

[111] Yanagida, *Shoki zenshū shisho no kenkyū*, 562;『自達摩之後，師資開道，皆善以方便，取證於心，隨所發言，略無繫說。』

[112] Various scholars have made important contributions to this subject. Particularly, Japanese scholars like Yanagida Seizan 柳田聖山 have demonstrated the constructive nature of such patriarchal genealogies in Chinese Buddhism; see *e.g.*, Yanagida, *Shoki zenshū shisho no kenkyū* and Tanaka, "Zenshū tōshi no hatten 禅宗灯史の發展 (The Development of Lamp History in Chan School)." Bernard Faure has argued that the construction of patriarchal genealogies demonstrates a "will to orthodoxy" at work in the early history of Chan development; see, Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 1-12. Tracing the "mystique of transmission," Wendi Adamek has explored a much more complex web of ideas influencing the formation of Chan patriarchal genealogies, one of which is "to establish a true Dharma within the Dharma and a true Saṅgha within the Saṅgha" (Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 157).

gong'an 公案 or "public cases" in the ensuing triumphant years of the tradition.[113]

Contemplatively, Chan as a special mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures also informs us another important philosophical principle underlying the logic of immediacy in contemplation, that is the idea of sympathetic resonance. In sympathetic resonance, when objects, or beings, belong to the same category or class, they spontaneously resonate with each other without any mediation whatsoever. Thus, given this idea of sympathetic resonance, not only is the im-mediate transmission between the master and the disciple sanctioned, but the sudden awakening of the disciple is also. In Chapter 2 where Shenhui's sudden teachings are discussed, we will see exactly how the idea of sympathetic resonance plays an essential role in Shenhui's teachings as the path to realize the fruition of sudden awakening.

III. The Search for a "Pure" Practice to Realize a "Pure" Chan

From tracing the transformations of Chinese *chan* teachings to exploring the distinguishing features of Chan Buddhism, I have presented an origin narrative of Chan identity seen from a perspective sensitive to the contemplative concerns of the participants. In the narrative, I have argued that the expression of Chan identity came to being as a result of the mutual influence between Bodhidharma's mind-nature teachings and the various transformations of Chinese *dhyāna* teachings over a period of five hundred years. Hence, the path of Chan to its formation was really a path of negotiations, on which early Chan contemplatives tried various ways to mediate the tensions caused by the differences among themselves and/or between traditional Buddhist views and their

[113] For a detailed discussion on the histories and meanings of *yulu* and *gong'an* (or *koan*) in Chan/Zen Buddhism, see, *e.g.*, Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright's three edited volumes, *The Koan*, *The Zen Canon*, and *Zen Classics*; see also McRae, *Seeing Through Zen*.

innovative teachings.

Paradoxically, in negotiating their differences, early Chan contemplatives further reinforced their group identity, in which three distinguishing features came to best characterize their emerging school. These three features include: Chan as Buddha's mind, Chan as spontaneous living, and Chan as a special mind-to-mind transmission outside the scriptures. In addition to being the characteristics of the new school, these three features, for Chan practitioners, converge contemplatively on achieving the soteriological goal of directly realizing one's awakened mind or sudden awakening, thus making the new school to be known as the tradition of sudden awakening via the direct seeing of one's true mind-nature. As a result of this convergence, the three distinguishing features of Chan Buddhism provide a context for us to understand not only some of the philosophical principles underlying the logic of immediacy in contemplation but also the deeper meaning of the negotiations in which early Chan adepts participated. As the former will be discussed in the later chapters, I would like to devote the remaining pages of this chapter to the latter.

Let me start this reflection with some questions. First, when considering their "negotiations" as converging contemplatively on the soteriological goal of sudden awakening, one naturally wonders why these early Chan practitioners were doing so. One possible reason emerging from our presentation of the three distinguishing features is that they considered sudden awakening not only the final fruition but also an indispensable part of the path, thus developing teachings, practices, and even the idea of patriarchal transmission around it and subsequently giving rise to the said convergence. In this way, sudden awakening embodies both the fruition and the path that leads to it. Yet, in making

sudden awakening the embodiment of both their goal and path, what were the early Chan contemplatives trying to do? Were they trying to illustrate some special message with their unique expression? Were they searching for a "pure" practice to realize a "pure" Chan that is "uncontaminated by its relationship to history,"[114] as some scholars have suggested? Or, were they simply expressing what they realized via their awakening experiences?

As a result of negotiations, the formation of Chan identity surely was not "uncontaminated by its relationship to history," at least in terms of its form. That is to say, as a social phenomenon, a "pure" Chan that has not changed in form with respect to historical or socioreligious conditions did not and will not exist, for everything is dependently arising and will change according to its changing conditions. Thus, in the above presentation, we see that since early on Chinese *chan* teachings had gone through various transformations, and different Chan teachings and practices were also proposed by different Chan masters. However, as a religious or spiritual exercise, a "pure" Chan could exist, but it could only exist in its "spirit" or formless form. Accordingly, even though the "negotiations" of early Chan practitioners exhibited a wide spectrum of differences, they also converged contemplatively on the idea of sudden awakening to one's own awakened mind that is formless, ever-present, and all-embracive.

In this sudden awakening to the awakened mind, as we will see in the later chapters, the goal is to develop a unique style of self-awareness so that the practitioners can enjoy freedom without stagnation or bondage and at the same time act according to their socioreligious conditions. As Chan contemplatives try to manifest this all-embracive awareness, they can certainly be exposed to conceptual deviations, or in Bernard Faure's

[114] Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 182.

term, "deviationist risks," such as intellectualism, frozen systemization, and ontic-hypostatization. However, even if they are under such risks, they do not need to develop any "scapegoat mechanism"[115] to exorcize such conceptual deviations or dualistically heterodox ideas, not only because such development is itself a conceptual deviation but also because the best "exorcist" of dualistic heterodoxies is one's primordially self-awareness that, by nature, "transcend[s] discriminating thought and dualism, even while he freely responds to things and engages in everyday events, without hindrance or confusion."[116] In this sense, the "pure" Chan illustrated with the idea of sudden awakening is to ask its practitioners to have a unique style of knowing that is similar to Eliot Deutsch's notion, a knowing that is centered in reality and involves wonder, openness, insight, and love.

Given this understanding, I argue that early Chan contemplatives' pursuit of a "pure" practice to realize a "pure" Chan was neither to establish a doctrinal system or a school that is uncontaminated by its relationship to history, nor an endeavor trying to bring back an idealized past or to bring forth a transcendent realm that cannot be contaminated by anything at all. Rather, it was a message from the experiences of Chan masters to ask their followers to participate as fully and openly as possible in their everyday lives with their vitalized awarenesses so that they could eventually reveal their True-nature without any mediation. As such, I am reminded of Matthew Kapstein's thoughtful reflection on the study of religious experience; he writes,

[115] In his conclusion to *The Will to Orthodoxy*, Bernard Faure writes, "By assigning the role of scapegoat to the Northern school, which thus became the emblematic figure of heterodoxy, one could succeed in limiting in time and space those deviationist risks (intellectualism, quetism, secularization) to which Chan is constantly exposed" (182). For his discussion on this "scapegoat mechaism" in the Chan tradition, see also Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 49.

[116] Poceski, *Ordinary Mind as the Way*, 186.

> Philosophical reflection on religious experience goes wrong when it treats its topic primarily as the concern of a denaturalized epistemology; religious experience should be considered, rather, in its connection with the ways of "spiritual exercise," or of the "technologies of the self," as elaborated within specific life-worlds.[117]

Thus, the study of Chan teachings, or religious knowledge in general, I would also argue, goes wrong if it *only* considers its topic as the concern of sociopolitical or religious institutional struggle for power. Rather, it should be *balanced* with its existential or contemplative transformation effect that, after all, is the higher goal as elaborated within its specific worldview. I believe it is with this understanding in mind that my above narrative of the pursuit of a "pure" Chan via the various negotiations of early Chan contemplatives would be best contextualized and appreciated.

It *is* true that religious knowledge has sociopolitical significance, as any knowledge would. Thus, it can certainly be used (or rather abused) by individuals or institutions to fulfill personal or sectarian purposes; such examples can be undoubtedly found in the history of every religion. Nonetheless, if we treat religious knowledge, similar to Eliot Deutsch, not as having "a distinctive or special object", but as having "a unique style or manner" of knowing, religious knowledge such as the teaching of a "pure" Chan could inspire its practitioners to manifest an awareness of "wonder, openness, insight, and love," while maintaining a mind of tranquility that is centered in reality.[118] In such a way, the boundary of the abuser and the abused, and any dualistic categories for that matter, could be "vitalized" and even deconstructed, for their ways of knowing have been vitalized with a lively awareness. Perhaps, such a lively awareness is the best wonder-making gift one can obtain from any religious knowledge including the teaching

[117] Kapstein, "Rethinking Religious Experience: Seeing the Light in the History of Religions," 281.
[118] For Eliot Deutsch's idea, see his paper entitled "Knowing Religiously" in the edited volume, *Knowing Religiously*, by Leroy Rouner. The quotations are in Deutsch, "Knowing Religiously," 22.

of a "pure" Chan.

In this way, the above reflection on the pursuit of a "pure" practice to realize a "pure" Chan can therefore be seen as to revealing the deeper meaning of the negotiations through which early Chan contemplatives centralized the idea of sudden awakening to one's own awakened mind. As a result, the origin narrative of Chan development presented in this chapter not only demonstrates how the logic of immediacy in contemplation came to being in Chan. Since the perspective taken is more sensitive to the contemplative concerns of the participants that shape the spiritual elements of their tradition, it thus also provides an alternative reading, as shown above, to studies of Chan teachings and history only performed from the sociopolitical perspective. Those studies, without concerning spiritual or religious efficacy, may one-sidedly characterize the development of a religious tradition like Chan as "the outcome of the 'will to orthodoxy,'"[119] a result of a religious sect rising through power struggle.

[119] Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 4.

Chapter 2. Sympathetic Resonance and "Equal Learning": The Contemplative Structure of Shenhui's Sudden Teaching

Recognized by some modern scholars as the Chan master who "first championed the doctrine of sudden enlightenment,"[1] Shenhui 神會 (684-758) undoubtedly serves as a fine exemplar for furthering our understanding of the logic of immediacy in contemplation following the historical study of Chan formation in the previous chapter. Even though his life and teachings have been examined by various scholars, the contemplative structure of his sudden teaching, in my opinion, has not been thoroughly and/or fairly explored.[2] Accordingly, my discussion in Chapter 2 not only will contribute to our investigation into the idea of immediacy but also will provide an alternative, *i.e.*, contemplative, reading of Shenhui's legacy that has been mostly discussed from the sociopolitical perspective in the past.

Indeed, to an extent, ever since he decided to "set straight the orthodoxy" (Ch. *ding zongzhi* 定宗旨) in the *wuzhe da hui* 無遮大會 or "unrestricted great assembly" of 732 CE at the Dayun si 大雲寺 of Huatai 滑台 (northeast of Luoyang 洛陽), Shenhui was destined to be a controversial person. As the initiator of the debates between the Northern and the Southern Sects in Chan,[3] he has been "portrayed … as an extremist [by Adamek], … as a precocious rationalist revolutionary (in Hu Shi's representation) or as a self-aggrandizing opportunist (a coloring that emerges in studies by Faure and McRae)."[4] Thus, various studies have only focused on understanding the polemic effects of

[1] McRae, "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism," 231.
[2] See *e.g.*, McRae, "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism"; Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 89-100; and Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 171-179.
[3] For related issues, see, *e.g.*, Peter N. Gregory's edited volume, *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*, particularly Luis Gómez's "Purifying Gold: The Metaphor of Effort and Intuition in Buddhist Thought and Practice."
[4] Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission*, 138.

Shenhui's "campaign" against the Northern Sect.[5]

However, the question remains: Is Shenhui's sudden Chan purely rhetorical without involving any practice of ongoing spiritual training, as some scholars have suggested?[6] My investigation below suggests otherwise. Based on his oral and written teachings given in the three Dunhuang manuscripts,[7] namely, (1) *Heze heshang wenda za zhengyi* 荷澤和上問答雜徵義 (hereafter *Zhengyi*),[8] (2) *Nanyang heshang dunjiao jietuo chanmen zhiliao xing tanyu* 南陽和上頓教解脫禪門直了性壇語 (hereafter *Tanyu*),[9] and (3) *Putidamo nanzong ding shifei lun* 菩提達摩南宗定是非論 (hereafter *Shifei lun*),[10] I delve into Shenhui's sudden teaching and reveal its underlying structure for contemplation. As a result, I argue that Shenhui's sudden Chan did not just impact later Chan rhetorically as other scholars have suggested,[11] but it provided a logic of

[5] For example, (1) among other issues, Bernard Faure analyzed that Shenhui's division of Chan into the "Northern School" and the "Southern School" had the effect of placing the Northern School as a scapegoat for heterodoxy in the development of early Chan; see Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 47-52 and Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, 182. (2) Scholars like Tanaka Ryōshō, John McRae, and Bernard Faure have amended Shenhui's implied criticism that the teachings of the Northern School were all gradualist in nature; see Tanaka, *Tonkō zenshū bunken no kenkyū* 敦煌禅宗文献の研究 (*A Study of Dunhuang Chan Manuscripts*), McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism*, Chapter VII, and Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy*, Chapter 4. (3) John McRae and Bernard Faure have also explored the impact of Shenhui's "campaign" on the formation of later Chan teachings, especially on the avoidance of dualistic formations and the employment of the rhetoric of immediacy; see McRae, "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism" and Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 11-78.

[6] See *e.g.*, McRae, "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism."

[7] For these three Dunhuang texts, I have mainly relied on Hu Shi's collection and recension for my study; see Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji* 神會和尚遺集 (*A Collection of Monk Shenhui's Writings*). Occasionally, I have also used Lin Junfu's compilation, *Heze Shenhui dashi yulu* 荷澤神會大師語錄 (*The Recorded Sayings of Master Heze Shenhui*) for some revisions. For a more detailed bibliographical reference on these Dunhuang texts, see *e.g.*, the bibliography of Wendi Adamek's *The Mystique of Transmission* under the corresponding entries.

[8] This title can be translated as *Miscellaneous Dialogues of the Venerable of Heze.*

[9] This title can be translated as *The Platform Address of the Venerable of Nanyang on Directly Comprehending the Nature According to the Chan Approach of Emancipation in the Sudden Teaching.*

[10] This title can be translated as *Treatise Determining the True and False about the Southern School of Bodhidharma.*

[11] Regarding the rhetorical impact of Shenhui's sudden teaching, John McRae writes, "In combination with his doctrine of subitism, the very heat of Shen-hui's criticism of gradualism had a rhetorical impact of the highest significance: by publicly criticizing one faction's meditation teachings he made all the members of

immediacy for contemplation and a way to realize sudden awakening, which Shenhui insisted to be the orthodoxy and orthopraxy inherited from the past patriarchs from Bodhidharma 菩提達摩 (d. 536?) down to his master Huineng 慧能 (638-713) and which was carried further by the "descendents of the Southern School" such as Mazu's 馬祖 (709-788) Hongzhou School (Ch. *hongzhou zong* 洪州宗), Shitou's 石頭 (700-790) Shitou School (Ch. *shitou zong* 石頭宗), as well as the later "Five Houses" (Ch. *wujia* 五家) of classic Chan.[12]

I. No-Thought: Sympathetic Resonance with the Awakened Mind

So, how did Shenhui's sudden teaching have such an impact on the development of Chan, especially when some earlier studies have criticized his sudden teaching as inconsistent or rhetorical?[13] Moreover, in his *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, Bernard Faure goes further to argue a general skepticism on the teaching of sudden awakening; for

the growing Ch'an school more aware of the external expression---the packaging, if you will---of their ideas and modes of practice. After Shen-hui, Ch'an masters learned to protect themselves from criticism by avoiding dualist formulations. ... This imposition of the avoidance of dualistic formulations, which I call the *rule of rhetorical purity*, was one of Shen-hui's most important areas of impact on Chinese Ch'an" (emphasis added; McRae, "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism," 258).

[12] The Five Houses are (1) Guiyang School 溈仰宗, (2) Linji or Rinzai School 臨濟宗, (3) Caodong or Sōtō School 曹洞宗, (4) Yunmen School 雲門宗, and (5) Fayan School 法眼宗. For a history of and an introduction to these schools, see, *e.g.*, Du and Wei, *Zhongguo chanzong tongshi* 中國禪宗通史 (*The General History of Chinese Chan School*), Chapter 5; Yang, *Tang wudai chanzong shi* 唐五代禪宗史 (*The History of Chan School in the Tang and Five Dynasties*), Chapter 8; Cleary, *The Five Houses of Zen*; and Dumoulin, *Zen Buddhism: A History*, 211-242.

[13] In his "Purifying Gold," Luis Gómez argues that, in the polemic context of Shenhui's attempt to draw the line that separates his type of Chan from that of the Northern School, one can "discover the complexities and inconsistencies of his position" (74); see also Gómez, "Purifying Gold," 74-86. In his "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism," John McRae concludes the paper with the following words, "Just as Shen-hui's major effort was propagandistic, his major impact lay in the realm of rhetoric and mythopoeia. In addition to establishing a standard of rhetorical purity, he is responsible for the addition of many new anecdotes regarding Bodhidharma and the early patriarchs to the early Ch'an library. In the process Shen-hui helped make the theory of the transmission of the dharma much more concrete and precise, even though he did not significantly alter the conceptual basis of the theory" (258); see also McRae, "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism," 250-251; 253-255.

Faure, sudden awakening is perfectly *aporetical* since there is no way leading to it, and thus, sudden awakening cannot be the result of an empirical progress, but essentially a "by-product" of one's spiritual practice.[14]

To be sure, for Shenhui, sudden awakening is definitely not a "by-product." Even though it is aporetical, because one cannot reason it out through dialectics, there still exist contemplative practices to empirically realize it. Put another way, I would say that, for Shenhui, it is exactly because there is no *intentional* or *dialectical* way leading to one's awakened mind (Skt. *bodhicitta*; Ch. *putixin* 菩提心; Tib. *byang chub kyi sems*) that one needs to realize it through the idea of immediacy, or more precisely, the contemplative practice of "sympathetic resonance" (Ch. *xiangying* 相應).

A. Sympathetic Resonance: An Access to the Unconditional and Holistic Being of Awakened Mind

Essentially, Shenhui's logic of immediacy or suddenness in contemplation is predicated on his understanding of what the true nature of one's awakened mind is, which, we will see from below, is completely in line with the philosophical principles underlying the idea of immediacy discussed in the previous chapter. Specifically, for Shenhui, one's awakened mind is not only *innate* (Ch. *benju* 本具) or *unconditional* (Ch. *fei yuanqi* 非緣起) but also *ubiquitous* or *all-pervasive* (Ch. *bian yiqie chu* 遍一切處). Because it is unconditional, one's awakened mind can only be directly revealed with "effortlessness" (Ch. *wuzuo* 無作) via the practice of sympathetic resonance, for any intentional effort is conditional and thus incompatible with one's awakened mind. In this revealing of one's awakened mind, one can only *be awakened* rather than *become awakened*, for one's

[14] See Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 44-47.

awakened mind involves no *becoming in essence* even though its manifestations may change with conditions.[15] In this sense, one's awakened mind is actually an *awake* mind at all times. It is only to follow the traditional designation that I refer this awake mind as the awakened mind throughout the dissertation.

Moreover, for Shenhui, the all-pervasive property of one's awakened mind dictates that the practitioner maintain this being awakened in effortlessness *in all actions*, namely, not just in the Buddhist practice of meditation but in all of one's everyday actions and experiences. In this way, Shenhui's suddenness teaches the practitioner to live as *a holistic being*, in which one abandons any thought of intentionality to become awakened, but to directly be awakened with effortless sympathetic resonance, not just in meditation but in all actions. Here, the directional course of intentionality is replaced by the holistic embracing of sympathetic resonance in effortlessness.

Let me elaborate Shenhui's suddenness further with his own words. In his *Zhengyi*, Shenhui teaches,

> Not through gradual steps to understand but due to [the mind's] nature is the meaning of sudden awakening. [To realize that] one's mind is originally empty and tranquil is [the meaning of] sudden awakening. That this mind does not dwell [on anything whatsoever] is [the meaning of] sudden awakening.[16]

Clearly, from this passage, for Shenhui, suddenness is warranted, and even dictated, because of the true nature of one's awakened mind. And, this awakened mind is, in

[15] In discussing the subitist interpretations of *tathāgatagarbha* praxis, Robert E. Buswell also argues this point; he writes, "The Tathāgatagarbha premise that enlightenment was inherent in the mind of each and every sentient being led to the conclusion that one need only accept—that is, believe fully in—that claim in order to realize one's enlightenment. Tathāgatagarbha praxis as it was conceived in East Asian Buddhism thus results not in the person *becoming* enlightened (and thus changing his fundamental nature) but simply *being* enlightened (merely accepting that fundamental nature)" (Buswell, *The Formation of Ch'an Ideology in China and Korea*, 143).

[16] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 130;『不由階漸而解，自然故，是頓悟義。自心從本已來空寂者是頓悟。即心無所住為頓悟。』

essence, empty and tranquil. It does not dwell on anything whatsoever, but like empty space, it exists constantly and permeates ubiquitously. It is an indivisible whole beyond reasoning and conditional arising (Skt. *pratītyasamutpāda*; Ch. *yuanqi* 緣起; Tib. *rten 'brel*), and is called the "suchness-body" (Skt. *dharmakāya*; Ch. *zhenru shen* 真如身; Tib. *chos sku*) of the Buddha.[17] This understanding of Shenhui's is not unique and can be even said to be a mainstream of the Buddhist world in the Tang dynasty. What is unique is that Shenhui conflates this understanding of the awakened mind with sudden awakening. For Shenhui, since one's awakened mind is an indivisible whole beyond reasoning and conditional arising, it cannot be realized through gradual steps.[18] Rather, it can only be realized through the gate of suddenness, particularly, the work of sympathetic resonance.[19]

In Chinese cosmology, the idea of sympathetic resonance indicates that those who belong to the same category or *lei* 類 can "spontaneously resonate with each other just as do two identically tuned strings on a pair of zithers."[20] Thus, for Shenhui, suddenness

[17] In his *Tanyu*, Shenhui teaches, "Just be aware that the original substance is tranquil and empty of any [substantial] things whatsoever. It does not abide [on anything] either. Same as the empty space, it permeates ubiquitously. It is the suchness-body of the Buddha (但自知本體寂靜，空無所有，亦無住著，等同虛空，無處不遍，即是諸佛真如身)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 240).

[18] For Shenhui, if something that is conditionally arisen, then it belongs to the realm of gradualness. Thus, in his *Zhengyi*, when a lay official asks him, "If [one's awakened mind] is not based on conditional arising, how does it know?" Shenhui replies, "On this original substance that is empty and tranquil, it is self-endowed with *prajñā* awareness that knows. It does not rely on conditional arising. If it is based on conditional arising, then it has gradual sequence (本空寂體上，自有般若智能知，不假緣起。若立緣起，即有次第)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 113).

[19] In his *Zhengyi*, Shenhui takes the following position on his advocacy of suddenness: "Now I do not speak of Five Vehicles but [directly] entering into Buddha's knowing and seeing. Based on the meaning of this sūtra, it only demonstrates the gate of suddenness. Only instantaneous sympathetic resonance is allowed [*i.e.*, is feasible]. Indeed, it can never be [realized] via gradual steps (今既不言五乘，唯言入佛知見。約斯經義，只顯頓門。唯存一念相應，實更非由階漸)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 131).

[20] Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 83. For a more detailed discussion on the notion of sympathetic resonance in Chinese cosmology, see Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 82-88. For indic ideas of resonance such as the "Seal of Śambhu," see, *e.g.*, Muller-Ortega, "On the Seal of Śambhu."

only comes from the practitioner realizing that one's own mind is, in essence, tranquil, empty of any inherent existence, and not dwelling on anything whatsoever. This realization essentially puts its practitioner in the same category as the Buddhas. Consequently, the practitioner can have "instantaneous sympathetic resonance" (Ch. *yinian xiangying* 一念相應) with the state of Buddhahood and thus "enter" the realm of *Buddha's knowing and seeing* (Ch. *fo zhijian* 佛知見).[21]

B. No-Thought: The **Dhyāna** *of the* **Tathāgata** *as Sympathetic Resonance*

Yet, for Shenhui, what does sympathetic resonance really mean? In his *Zhengyi*, Shenhui explains,

> The meaning of sympathetic resonance is to see [the state of] no-thought. To see [the state of] no-thought is to realize one's self-nature. To realize one's self-nature is to grasp nothing [whatsoever]. Because of grasping nothing, it is the *dhyāna* of the *tathāgata*.[22]

So, for Shenhui, sympathetic resonance is really a way to realize the *dhyāna of the tathāgata* (Ch. *rulai chan* 如來禪), particularly attained by attuning oneself to "see [the state of] no-thought," to "realize one's self-nature," and to "grasp nothing [whatsoever]." This is because any intention of grasping is conditional, thus deviating oneself from the effortlessness or spontaneity of sympathetic resonance. It is only when one goes beyond all dualities, neither "activates thought" (Ch. *zuoyi* 作意) nor "non-activates thought" (Ch. *bu zuoyi* 不作意), can the practitioner realize sympathetic resonance in its

[21] This entering is an entering that comes from the manifestation of one's innate awakening. Thus, it does not involve any sense of *becoming* but the manifestation of one's innate *being*.

[22] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 131-132;『相應義者，謂見無念。[見無念者，]謂了自性。[了自性者，]謂無所得。以無所得，即如來禪。』

effortlessness.[23] In this way, Shenhui's suddenness, in effect, is really asking the practitioner to *be in the state of effortlessness*, a hallmark of Buddhahood, through his or her sympathetic resonance with the awakened qualities of the Buddha.

Moreover, among the awakened qualities of the Buddha, Shenhui particularly emphasizes *wunian* 無念 or "no-thought." For him, suchness (Ch. *zhenru* 真如) is the root of *wunian.* Accordingly, Shenhui, following his master Huineng, makes *wunian* the principle (Ch. *zong* 宗) of his system.[24] However, what is Shenhui's *wunian*? In short, non-activating thought is *wunian*.[25] But, Shenhui does not stop there. For him, *wunian* asks the practitioner to not give rise to dualistic thoughts so that the "fundamental wisdom" or "original awareness" (Ch. *benzhi* 本智) of one's awakened mind, empty and tranquil by nature, can manifest to "know" (Ch. *zhi* 知) the world.[26]

This original awareness that knows is not conditionally arisen. It is the nature of the awakened mind. In fact, for Shenhui, this original awareness that knows is *ultimate reality* (Ch. *shixiang* 實相).[27] I believe that it is due to this understanding that in his

[23] Thus, Shenhui clarifies, "All cultivators, the mind does not have [the colors of] green, yellow, red, white, or black, nor does it have [the movements of] entering, exiting, coming, or going and [the ideas of] far, near, front, or back; it neither activates thought nor non-activates thought. As such, it is sympathetic resonance (諸學道者，心無青黃赤白黑，亦無出入去來及遠近前後，亦無作意，亦無不作意。如是者為之相應也)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 133).

[24] In his *Tanyu*, Shenhui states, "Suchness is the substance of *wunian* [*i.e.*, no-thought]. Because of this meaning, [I] establish '*wunian*' as the principle (真如是無念之體，以是義故，立「無念」為宗)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 240-241).

[25] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 101;『不作意，即是無念。』

[26] On *wunian*'s relation with dualistic thoughts, Shenhui states, "Transcend both being and nonbeing, and [the idea of] Middle Way is also lost. That is *wunian* (有無雙遣，中道亦亡者，即是無念)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 145). When the mind is in the state of *wunian*, for Shenhui, "The mind naturally has nothing. This mind of having nothing is, by nature, empty and tranquil. On this empty-and-tranquil substance, it is self-endowed with original awareness that knows as its illuminating manifestation (心自無物。即無物心，自性空寂。空寂體上，自有本智能知以為照用)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 102).

[27] In his *Zhengyi*, Shenhui once teaches, "On this substance of *wunian*, it is self-endowed with the life of awareness. This life of original awareness is the ultimate reality (無念體上，自有智命，本智命即是實相)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 101).

Chanyuan zhu quanji duxu 禪源諸詮集都序 (*Prolegomenon to the Collection of Expressions of the Chan Source*), Zongmi 宗密 (780-841)[28] characterizes Shenhui's teaching as follows:

> All the sages have said that everything is dreamlike. Thus, deluded thoughts are fundamentally tranquil. Conditional objects are fundamentally empty. The mind that is empty and tranquil [is endowed with] spiritual knowing that is not concealed [i.e., utterly lucid]. It is this empty-and-tranquil knowing that is your true nature. Be it deluded or enlightened, the mind, by nature, is self-aware. It is not born out of conditions, nor does it arise due to circumstances. The single word of knowing [is] the gate of myriad wonders.[29]

In this way, Shenhui's *wunian* is not just the state of no-thought, but the *basis* (Ch. *ben* 本) to present the original awareness or "spiritual knowing" (Ch. *lingzhi* 靈知) of one's awakened mind, which is "the gate of myriad wonders" (Ch. *zhongmiao zhi men* 眾妙之門). As a result, in his *Zhengyi*, Shenhui characterizes *wunian* as the "omniscient awareness" (Ch. *yiqie zhi* 一切智),[30] and in the *Shifei lun* recorded by Dugu Pei 獨孤沛 (c. 7th-8th centuries), Shenhui acclaims,

> For one who sees *wunian*, six faculties have no defilements. One who sees *wunian* reaches [the realm of] Buddha's knowing and seeing. One who sees *wunian* is named the ultimate reality. One who sees *wunian* [realizes] the unsurpassable truth of the Middle Way. One who sees *wunian* simultaneously realizes virtues as many as the sands of the Ganges. One who sees *wunian* can develop all dharma. One

[28] An important Buddhist scholar-monk in the Tang dynasty, Guifeng Zongmi 圭峰宗密 (780-841) has been recognized as the fifth patriarch of the Huayan School (Ch. *huayan zong* 華嚴宗) as well as a patriarch of the Heze Sect (Ch. *heze zong* 荷澤宗) of Southern Chan. He left a number of important records on the Buddhist teachings and history in Tang China, and is thus considered by modern scholars one of the most important figures in East Asian Buddhism. For a study of Zongmi and his teachings, see, *e.g.*, Gregory, *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism.*

[29] Zongmi, *Chanyuan zhu quanji duxu*, T. 48 (2015): 402c27-403a2;『諸法如夢，諸聖同說。故妄念本寂，塵境本空，空寂之心，靈知不昧。即此空寂之知，是汝真性。任迷任悟，心本自知，不藉緣生，不因境起。知之一字眾妙之門。』

[30] In his *Zhengyi*, at one place Shenhui characterizes *wunian* as follows: "*Wunian* is one thought. One thought is the omniscient awareness (無念即是一念，一念即是一切智)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 145).

> who sees *wunian* encompasses all dharma.[31]

With its myriad wonders, for Shenhui, the original awareness accompanied by the state of *wunian* empowers its practitioner to participate in all worldly phenomena with one's ordinary senses and still keep the mind in the state of complete openness and tranquility. So, Shenhui asserts, "one [who] sees *wunian*, even though still operating with [one's ordinary senses of] seeing, hearing, perceiving, and knowing, remains in constant openness and tranquility. That is, at once, the simultaneous equalness of *śīla*, *samādhi*, and *prajñā* replete with myriad practices."[32] This is reminiscent of the *wunianxing* 無念行 or the "practice of no-thought" in Huineng's *Platform Sūtra* 壇經 where Huineng teaches,

> [E]ven though you see all things, you do not attach to them, but, always keeping your own nature pure, cause the six thieves to exit through the six gates. Even though you are in the midst of the six dusts, you do not stand apart from them, yet are not stained by them, and are free to come and go.[33]

In such a neither-grasping-nor-relinquishing way, Huineng and Shenhui ask their followers to accord with the Buddha dharma in their daily activities in the manner of *wunian* that ultimately and instantaneously puts them in the same category as the Buddhas. As a result, the contemplatives reveal their own true self-nature in sympathetic resonance. Shenhui insists that, since one's awakened mind, by nature, grasps nothing and is nongraspable, no intentional approaches can lead one to it. Consequently, he

[31] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 309;『見無念者，六根無染。見無念者，得向佛知見。見無念者，名為實相。見無念者，中道第一義諦。見無念者，恒沙功德一時等備。見無念者，能生一切法。見無念者，能攝一切法。』

[32] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 241;『若見無念者，雖具見聞覺知，而常空寂。即戒定慧一時齊等，萬行俱備。』

[33] *Liuzu tanjing*, T. 48 (2007): 340c20-22;『見一切法，不著一切法；遍一切處，不著一切處，常淨自性，使六賊從六門走出。於六塵中，不離不染，來去自由。』 The translation is taken from Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, 153.

directs his followers to suddenness with the sympathetic resonance of *wunian*. In the state of no-thought, the practitioner spontaneously and effortlessly manifests his or her own awakened mind in its holistic (or all-inclusive) state of being.

II. A Holistic Practice: Shenhui's Integration of Sudden Awakening and Gradual Cultivation

For Shenhui, even though there are no intentional approaches that can lead one to one's awakened mind, the sympathetic resonance of no-thought is an empirical practice with which one *artfully*, rather than *arduously*, cultivates oneself for realization. I argue that this "artful endeavor"[34] of Shenhui's *wunian* lies in his unique integration of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation. With this integration, I argue, Shenhui's sudden Chan essentially conveys that the logic of immediacy in contemplation must paradoxically involve gradualness, but it must integrate the gradualness in the context of suddenness so that the logic of immediacy can be artfully implemented without the dualistic or conceptual faults implied by the idea of gradualness.

A. Gradual Cultivation within the Context of Sudden Awakening

Based on Zongmi's reading, some scholars have interpreted Shenhui's teaching of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation as "sudden enlightenment followed by gradual cultivation"; their interpretations consider Shenhui's sudden enlightenment as an initial instantaneous experience of enlightenment insight, with which the practitioner further

[34] Here, I am borrowing the term "artful endeavor" from Anne C. Klein and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, which they discuss in their *Unbounded Wholeness* regarding the practice of Dzogchen. Even though the specific contents of their artful endeavor are not necessarily the same, both Shenhui and Dzogchen emphasize the inappropriateness of arduous effort, as effort is incompatible with the awakened mind (Shenhui) and open awareness (Dzogchen). For a detailed discussion on artful endeavor, see Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, 110-116.

cultivates himself or herself so as to achieve the final realization.[35] I argue that, for Shenhui, sudden awakening and gradual cultivation must be integrated in a way so that sudden awakening does not just bring an initial instantaneous experience of insight, but it actually serves as a constant guiding principle, or more precisely, an innate principle, for gradual cultivation. In this way, Shenhui's gradual cultivation must be *integrated in the context of sudden awakening* rather than follow after it. As it is integrated in the context of suddenness, Shenhui's gradual cultivation must be *in-spirited* with suddenness so that it effectively traverses no stages but only takes its goal as the path, thereby avoiding the dualistic or conceptual mediation implied in the usual gradualist models of realization.

To understand his unique integration of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation, Shenhui's response to Monk Zhide 志德 (c. 8th century) is exactly what we need. In the *Zhengyi*, Zhide wonders why Shenhui only emphasizes sudden awakening and does not permit gradual cultivation. So he asks, "Is it not true that one takes gradual steps to ascend a nine-story platform?" To that Shenhui responds,

> [I am] just afraid that what is being ascended is not a nine-story platform but a dirt mound and barbarian tomb. If it is actually a nine-story platform, this is the meaning of sudden awakening. Now [if one is to] establish gradualness in the suddenness, this is like ascending a nine-story platform via gradual steps. However, it is not permissible to establish gradualness in the gradualness.[36]

The above response of Shenhui's strongly suggests that his sudden awakening is *to correctly locate the "nine-story platform"*[37] that symbolizes the path to Buddhahood.

[35] For example, Peter Gregory has interpreted Zongmi's understanding as a three-staged model of the path: (1) initial insight, (2) gradual cultivation, and (3) final enlightenment; see Gregory, "Sudden Enlightenment Followed by Gradual Cultivation," 283. See also McRae, "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism," 253-255.
[36] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 130;『恐畏所登者，不是九層之台。恐畏登者土堆胡塚。若實是九層之台，此是頓悟義。今於頓中而[立其漸者，即]如登九層之台，要藉階漸，終不向漸中而立漸義。』
[37] It is interesting that Shenhui used a "nine-story platform" to symbolize the path to Buddhahood. Did he

That is to say, it is when the nine-story platform is correctly found that one can then gradually climb it to the top, thus giving rise to Shenhui's integration of gradual cultivation within the context of sudden awakening. On the other hand, if one starts from gradualness, metaphorically speaking, for Shenhui, it is setting the compass in a wrong direction so that one can only find some "dirt mound and barbarian tomb." Having found the wrong place, no matter how one arduously makes the gradual steps, one will still be on the "dirt mound" and never get to the top of the "nine-story platform," *i.e.*, the state of ultimate awakening. Thus, Shenhui uncompromisingly insists that it is not permissible to talk about gradualness in the gradualness.

B. The Revelation of Sudden Awakening for Gradual Cultivation: Taking the Goal as the Path

In the context of integrating gradual cultivation into sudden awakening, Shenhui further explains what he really means by sudden awakening to Zhide,

> (1) [With respect to everything,] the simultaneous understanding of its theoretical principle and [phenomenal] insight is called sudden awakening. (2) Not through gradual steps to understand but due to [the mind's] nature is the meaning of sudden awakening. (3) [To realize that] one's mind is originally empty and tranquil is [the meaning of] sudden awakening. (4) That this mind does not dwell [on anything whatsoever] is [the meaning of] sudden awakening. (5) That one realizes, through the phenomena, the mind that grasps nothing is [the meaning of] sudden awakening. (6) That one knows all the phenomena as such is [the meaning of] sudden awakening. (7) That one hears [the teaching of] *śūnyatā* but does not attach to the emptiness, nor grasps non-emptiness, is [the meaning of] sudden awakening. (8) That one hears [the teaching of] *ātman* but does not attach to the self, nor grasps selflessness, is [the meaning of] sudden

imply that there exist specifically nine stages or nine hierarchical vehicles for the path? Or was he referring to something else? While there is no particular evidence for us to ascertain what he meant exactly, the significance of number nine in Chinese culture may indicate that Shenhui chose nine to represent the highest achievement simply because of cultural reference. Historically, the number nine has been associated with the emperor whose robe is often ornamented with nine dragons, and Chinese mythology states that the dragon has nine children.

> awakening. (9) That one does not abandon birth and death [*i.e.*, saṃsāra] to enter nirvāṇa is [the meaning of] sudden awakening.[38]

This series of nine explanations of what sudden awakening means, I would argue, points out, for Shenhui, not only what the "nine-story platform" is, but also how to climb it. As my interpretation below will clearly show that these nine explanations collectively illustrate both the theoretical (*i.e.*, what) and the practical (*i.e.*, how) aspects of the "nine-story platform," they do not actually correspond to the "nine stories" of the platform. This interesting correspondence is purely coincidental.

Then, how should we construe the above nine explanations with respect to the "nine-story platform"? Generally speaking, Shenhui's nine explanations of sudden awakening can be divided into three parts, namely, an integration (Explanation 1), a section on the theoretical aspect (Explanations 2-4), and a section on the practical aspect (Explanations 5-9). Among them, in the previous section I have used the theoretical reasoning of Explanations 2-4 to argue that Shenhui's insistence on sudden awakening is predicated on the nature of one's awakened mind that is indivisible and holistic, and thus realizable only in the sympathetic resonance of *wunian*. Given this understanding, as the "target" of sudden awakening, Shenhui's "nine-story platform" can then be ascertained to be the true nature of one's awakened mind. Put another way, the "nine-story platform" is Shenhui's analog as a symbolic embodiment of the indivisible wholeness of one's awakened mind.

But, how does one climb this indivisible "nine-story platform" of one's awakened

[38] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 130;『[事須]理智兼釋，謂之頓悟。不由階漸而解，自然故，是頓悟義。自心從本已來空寂者，是頓悟。即心無所住為頓悟。存法悟心，心無所得，是頓悟。知一切法是[一切法為]頓悟。聞說空，不著空，亦不取不空，是頓悟。聞說我，不著我，亦不取無我，是頓悟。不捨生死而入涅槃，是頓悟。』

mind? In the integration of Explanation 1, Shenhui clearly identifies that everything consists of its "theoretical principle" (Ch. *li* 理) and "phenomenal insight" (Ch. *zhi* 智), which must be simultaneously realized to make his sudden teaching complete.[39] This integration of theoretical principle and phenomenal insight is the doctrinal basis for Shenhui to integrate subitism with gradualism, for the theoretical principle of suddenness has to be actualized by the phenomenal or practical insight of gradual cultivation, just as the "nine-story platform" of one's awakened mind, though it is indivisible in principle, paradoxically does have "nine-stories" in phenomenon, which can and has to be climbed to get to the top.

Naturally, one wonders next: What then are the "nine-stories" for Shenhui? From the above practical section of Explanations 5-9, I argue that the "nine-stories" represent all phenomena and all activities in which the practitioner participates. Thus, they include everything ranging from mundane phenomena to the Buddhist teachings of *śūnyatā* and *ātman*, or put another way, everything between and including saṃsāra and nirvāṇa. Given this all-inclusive "nine-story platform," for Shenhui, the key lies in *a unique attitude* or *manner*, which the practitioner manifests to climb the "nine stories." Take Explanation 5, "That one realizes, through the phenomena, the mind that grasps nothing is [the meaning of] sudden awakening," as an example (Explanations 6-9 can be analyzed similarly). Here, what Shenhui directs his audience to do is that as one interacts with all

[39] Traditionally, Chinese Buddhists had understood the relationship between *li* 理 and *zhi* 智 to be "*li* attained via the guidance of *zhi*" (Ch. *li you zhi dao* 理由智導). While it cannot be verified definitely that Shenhui was the first to advocate the idea of simultaneous understanding of *li* and *zhi*, he must be one of the first precursors. In his commentary to the *Āvataṃsaka-sūtra*, Chengguan 澄觀 (738-839), the fourth patriarch of Huayan School (Ch. *huayan zong* 華嚴宗), also proposes the idea of simultaneous understanding of *li* and *zhi* to interpret Daosheng's theory of sudden awakening, in which, for Daosheng, *li* is indivisible; see, Chengguan, *Dafangguang fo huayan jing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔 (*An Exegetic Commentary to the Āvataṃsaka-sūtra*), T. 36 (1736): 0440c.

worldly phenomena, one should always take the guiding principle that one's awakened mind grasps nothing as the attitude or manner, so that one develops no conceptual grasping or reification in the interaction, thus reflexively realizing the awakened mind that grasps nothing.

In other words, what Shenhui essentially asks the practitioner to do is to "embody" the true nature of the awakened mind in his or her *present awareness* while going through each activity in everyday life. If the practitioner is able to embody that innately guiding principle when participating in an activity, he or she is then climbing the indivisible "nine-story platform." On the other hand, if the practitioner cannot manifest the guiding principle in his or her present awareness, then all he or she does is just an ordinary action without the meaning of climbing the "nine-story platform." Consequently, the so-called "climbing" is actually a constant awareness of, or in Shenhui's terms, a sympathetic resonance with, the innately guiding principle, one's awakened mind, that is taken as both the path and the goal, a Chan feature we have discussed in the previous chapter.

Accordingly, from the above, the gradual cultivation within the context of sudden awakening, for Shenhui, is to perform all everyday activities in the unique manner of *wunian*, a sympathetic resonance with one's awakened mind. This sympathetic resonance of *wunian*, both the path and the goal, is not just "an initial instantaneous experience of enlightenment insight," as other scholars have understood. Instead, it is an "awakening via understanding" (Ch. *jiewu* 解悟) that should be *artfully* or *effortlessly* revealed within the context of everyday life. As it is a sympathetic resonance, this "awakening via understanding" is not a conceptual understanding. Rather, it is an "embodiment" of one's awakened mind manifesting as one's present awareness.

In this way, Shenhui's sudden awakening, in effect, is to reveal a holistic state of awareness, *i.e.*, one's original awareness or spiritual knowing discussed previously, from which the practitioner cannot deviate even for a single moment and with which the practitioner furthers his or her spiritual practice by transforming the "awakening via understanding" to the "awakening via realization" (Ch. *zhengwu* 證悟) in gradual cultivation. Even though there seems to be a distance between these two awakenings, this distance, for Shenhui, is not traveling from one state to another state, but within the indivisible "nine-story platform," *i.e.*, the holistic being of one's awakened mind.

In contrast, when Shenhui's teaching of sudden awakening is (mis)understood only as an instantaneous experience of insight, or even worse, as a rhetoric for the purpose of sectarianism or proselytism, his entire sudden teaching would be unfortunately dismissed as having no or little significance for ongoing spiritual or contemplative practice; his genuine concern regarding other teachings, particularly those of Northern Chan, would be considered only as a polemic criticism. But, the above analysis that highlights his unique integration of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation, I believe, not only provides an alternative interpretation of Shenhui's teaching, but also reveals an underlying structure for understanding, what I have called, the logic of immediacy in contemplation. This unique logic, in Shenhui's system we have learned so far, not only takes the goal as the path, but more specifically asks its practitioner to employ the sympathetic resonance of *wunian* or "no-thought" and thus manifest one's original awareness to live a holistic life, empathetically and effortlessly. In this way, Shenhui's sudden Chan informs us that not only does the logic of immediacy in contemplation involve gradualness, but it must integrate the gradualness in the context of suddenness so that the logic of immediacy can

be artfully implemented in contemplation without the dualistic or conceptual implications underlying the gradualist teachings. To further explore this logic, let us now journey deeper into the world of Shenhui's sudden enlightenment.

C. *Shenhui's "Equal Learning" of* **Samādhi** *and* **Prajñā**

In the Buddhist context, Shenhui also associates his integration of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation, or the logic of immediacy in contemplation, with the "equal learning" (Ch. *dengxue* 等學) of *samādhi* and *prajñā*. To understand the significance of this "equal learning," one has to understand how Shenhui construes the inner relationship between *samādhi* and *prajñā*. It is evident from the teachings where Shenhui reinterprets the Three Studies of *śīla*, *samādhi*, and *prajñā* as the three aspects[40] of the awakened mind that while he considers *samādhi* to be rooted in the essence or substance (Ch. *ti* 體) of one's awakened mind, he considers *prajñā* as its function or manifestation (Ch. *yong* 用). So, he states,

> What is called *samādhi* [is] that the substantiality [of one's awakened mind] is not graspable. What is called *prajñā* [is] that [the mind] is able to see the nongraspable substantiality that is utterly lucid and forever tranquil and is endowed with wondrous manifestations as many as the sands of the Ganges. This is the equal learning of *samādhi* and *prajñā*.[41]

This "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā*, as the nondual relationship of substance and manifestation, is readily seen in Shenhui's analogy of a lamp and its light, where he explains,

[40] In his *Tanyu*, Shenhui defines, "That the deluded mind is not being activated is *śīla*. That one has no deluded mind is *samādhi*. That one knows the mind has no delusion is *prajñā* (妄心不起名為戒，無妄心名為定，知心無妄名為慧)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 229).

[41] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 138;『今言定者，體不可得。今言慧者，能見不可得體，湛然常寂，有恒沙巧用。即是定慧等學。』

> *Samādhi* is not different from *prajñā*. *Prajñā* is not different from *samādhi*. They are just like a lamp and its light that are not separate from each other. When the lamp is, it is the substance of [its] light. When the light is, it is the manifestation of the lamp. … *Samādhi* and *prajñā* are similar as well. When *samādhi* is, it is the substance of *prajñā*. When *prajñā* is, it is the manifestation of *samādhi*.[42]

Here, similar to the way he integrates the "theoretical principle" of sudden awakening with the "phenomenal insight" of gradual cultivation analyzed above, Shenhui establishes the "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā* based on the inseparability of substance and manifestation. As the substance, *samādhi* must be unconditional and ever-present, whereas as the manifestation, *prajñā* can be conditional.[43] Yet, ultimately, both *samādhi* and *prajñā* must be spontaneously revealed from, or more precisely, in, the "self-suchness" (Ch. *ziru* 自如) of the awakened mind. Thus, Shenhui explains,

> That [the mind] does not activate thoughts and is empty of any [substantial] things whatsoever is called right *samādhi*. That [the mind] is able to see that [the mind] does not activate thoughts and is empty of any [substantial] things whatsoever is called right *prajñā*. … Why is it so? It is because of the self-suchness of the [awakened mind's] nature. This is the equal learning of *samādhi* and *prajñā*.[44]

In the "self-suchness" of one's awakened mind, Shenhui further elaborates, *samādhi* is the substance of tranquility, from which a "spontaneous awareness" (Ch. *ziran zhi* 自然智) that is capable of knowing its own substance of tranquility emerges as *prajñā*. Understanding this inseparable, or nondual, relationship is the quintessence of the "equal

[42] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 243;『定不異慧，慧不異定，如世間燈光不相去離。即燈之時光家體，即光之時燈家用。… 定慧亦然。即定之時是慧體，即慧之時是定用 。』

[43] So, in his *Tanyu*, Shenhui expounds, "It is necessary to rely on conditional *śīla* and conditional *prajñā* to reveal unconditional *śīla* and unconditional *prajñā*. But, with respect to *samādhi*, it is not so, [for conditional *samādhi*] only results in the fruition of human and deva. It is not in sympathetic resonance with the unsurpassable *bodhi* [*i.e.*, awakening] (要藉有作戒、有作慧，顯無作[戒、無作]慧。定則不然。若修有作定，即是人天因果，不與無上菩提相應)" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 229).

[44] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 128-129;『念不起，空無所有，名為正定。能見念不起，空無所有，名為正慧 … 何以故？性自如故，即是定慧等學。』

learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā*.[45] To implement this "equal learning" that manifests one's spontaneous awareness, Shenhui specifically asks his followers to cultivate their "wise discernment" (Ch. *shan fenbie* 善分別) and "non-activation of thought" (Ch. *bu qinian* 不起念) or "no-thought" (Ch. *wunian* 無念) with all sense faculties; in his *Tanyu*, Shenhui instructs his followers,

> If the eye sees form, wisely discern all forms and do not follow the discernment to activate [thoughts]. [Thus,] in form one obtains easiness; in form one obtains liberation replete with the *samādhi* of form objects. [If] the ear hears sound, wisely discern all sounds and do not follow the discernment to activate [thoughts]. [Thus,] in sound one obtains easiness; in sound one obtains liberation replete with the *samādhi* of sound objects. [If] the nose … [If] the tongue … [If] the body … [If] the mind … In this way, that [one employs] all sense faculties with wise discernment is the original *prajñā*. That one does not follow the discernment to activate [thoughts] is the original *samādhi*.[46]

As the quality of original *prajñā*, one's "wise discernment" naturally arises from his or her spontaneous awareness. However, if one follows the discernment and develops more thoughts, this spontaneous awareness will disappear in the sense of "folding" itself into one's dualistic consciousness that gives rise to conceptual or deluded thoughts. In this way, the spontaneous awareness can also be characterized, in Pramāṇa or Buddhist epistemological terms, as a *direct perception* (Skt. *pratyakṣa pramāṇa*; Ch. *xianliang* 現量; Tib. *mngon sum*). Yet, unlike the direct perception of a sense consciousness in Pramāṇa that only occurs in the first thought, in Shenhui's system, the direct perception

[45] In his *Tanyu*, Shenhui teaches, "Non-abiding is tranquility. The substance of tranquility is called *samādhi*. From this substance there exists a spontaneous awareness that is capable of knowing its own substance of tranquility; that is called *prajñā*. This is the equal [learning] of *samādhi* and *prajñā* (無住是寂靜。寂靜體即名為定。從體上有自然智，能知本寂靜體，名為慧。此是定慧等[學])" (Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 237).

[46] Hu, *Shenhui heshangyiji*, 241-242;『若眼見色，善分別一切色，不隨分別起，色中得自在，色中得解脫色塵三昧足。耳聞聲，善分別一切聲，不隨分別起，聲中得自在，聲中得解脫聲塵三昧足。鼻聞… 舌嘗… 身覺… 意分別… 如是諸根善分別是本慧，不隨分別起是本定。』

of one's spontaneous awareness in all sense faculties continues as long as the *samādhi* of "no-thought" abides firmly. In this way, the direct perception from Shenhui's "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā* is never separate from mundane phenomena, whereas the direct perception of Pramāṇa either exists as first thoughts or continues only as the nondual cognition of the ultimate, *śūnyatā*.

As one's spontaneous awareness is never separate from mundane phenomena, the practitioner can and should take all mundane phenomena as the opportunity to cultivate oneself. Following this reasoning, Shenhui thus advocates,

> The [*Vimalakirtinirdeśa-*]*sūtra* says: "Do not separate [oneself] from the dharma of the Way and present [oneself] in all the phenomena of common people." When participating in the myriad actions of the world, not activating any [dualistic] thought with respect to any phenomenon is the simultaneous cultivation of *samādhi* and *prajñā* that are not separate from each other.[47]

In this way, the simultaneous cultivation of *samādhi* and *prajñā* effectively gives rise to *a constant practice* that requires its practitioner to maintain a holistic state of awareness in the manner of "original *samādhi*," or "no-thought," while participating in all activities with the wise discernment of "original *prajñā*," or "spontaneous awareness." In the paradigm of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation, the constant practice derived from the simultaneous cultivation of *samādhi* and *prajñā* is a holistic practice, in which sudden awakening reveals the innate principle in the form of *samādhi* to guide gradual cultivation, whereas gradual cultivation shown in terms of the wise discernment of *prajñā* is a constant practice that only takes its goal as the path. In this way, Shenhui's "equal leaning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā*, accompanied by his integration of sudden awakening

[47] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 242;『[維摩詰]經云:「不捨道法，而現凡夫事。」種種運為世間，不於世事生念，是定慧雙修，不相去離。』

and gradual cultivation, distinctively offers us an *artful* implementation for the logic of immediacy in contemplation, as it requires its practitioner to engage in a holistic practice, in which the practitioner *artfully*, rather than *arduously*, cultivates himself or herself to attain awakening.

D. A Holistic Practice in Which "Knowing and Seeing" Pervade One's Being

Contemplatively, what underlies this artful, holistic practice derived from Shenhui's "equal learning" is the recognition that as soon as one abides in the state of no-thought, there will be a spontaneous awareness pervading all that one acts, speaks, and thinks. Historically, this idea not only contributed to the development of a Chan feature, namely, Chan as spontaneous living discussed in the previous chapter, but also facilitated a unique Chan understanding, in which one's "view" or literally "knowing-seeing" (Ch. *zhijian* 知見) *is* one's practice.[48] What Chan master Yongjue Yuanxian 永覺元賢 (1578-1657) teaches in his *Guanglu* 廣錄 (or *Recorded Sayings*) best illustrates this unique understanding; he says:

> Some said that the Chan School only emphasizes the view [literally *knowing-seeing*] but not the practice. [It is because they] don't know that the meaning of only emphasizing the view is that, other than the view, there is no other practice. If there is still other practice, then its view is still not the ultimate. This is like in a dark room. When a lamp is lit, the only thing that is important is for the lamp to illuminate brightly. How can there be the need to dispel the darkness? If there is still darkness to dispel, then the light is not fully

[48] The Chinese term *zhi-jian* 知見 is composed of two characters, namely, *zhi* 知 and *jian* 見. This Buddhist term has usually been translated as "view," as it signifies what one's understanding is regarding a certain teaching or a phenomenon. Literally, *zhi* 知 means to know and *jian* 見 means to see. Thus, *zhi-jian* 知見 can also be understood as "to know by seeing," "the knowledge obtained through seeing," or simply "knowing and seeing," which I have used below.

illuminating [the room] yet.[49]

But how does one's "view" (in terms of "knowing and seeing") fill the room with all its "lightness"? Master Yongjue further explains,

> One must truly contemplate on, and examine, one's own foothold until the sense of sacrality and secularity is extinguished and the empty space destroyed. [Therein,] there is not even awakening to obtain, not to mention affliction; there is not even nirvāṇa to obtain, not to mention birth and death [*i.e.*, saṃsāra]. This is called the true view and it is also the true practice too.[50]

Thus, the true view, and the true practice, that Yongjue tries to explain, is to contemplate on and examine one's own "foothold" until all dualities have been transcended. This "foothold" in Chan represents one's original nature. Thus, what Yongjue means by true "view" (Ch. *zhi-jian* 知見) is to truly "know" (Ch. *zhi* 知) and "see" (Ch. *jian* 見) into one's own being so that one meets face-to-face with one's original nature without any mediation whatsoever.

Given this gloss of the Chinese term "view" or *zhi-jian* 知見 informed by Yongjue's commentary, the equivalent of view and practice signifies that one's "knowing and seeing" is one's practice. Learning from Shenhui's teachings, we know that this "knowing and seeing" must be holistic so as to pervade "all that one acts, speaks, and thinks," *i.e.*, one's entire being. Therefore, Shenhui requires his followers to engage in a constant practice, in which the practitioners try to embody the awakened mind in their present awareness as the guiding principle so that they go through each activity in

49 *Yongjue heshang Guanglu* 永覺和尚廣錄 (*The Recorded Sayings of Master Yongjue*), X. 72 (1437): 439a23-439b2;『或謂宗門但貴知見，不尚操履。不知，所謂但貴知見者，以知見外，別無操履也。若別有操履，則其知見，猶未真在。此如暗室中，忽然一燈，但貴燈明，豈更除暗。若有暗可除，則其明亦未明矣。』

50 *Yongjue heshang Guanglu*, X. 72 (1437): 439b6-8;『須是向自己脚跟下，真參實究，直得聖凡情盡，虛空粉碎。菩提尚不可得，何況煩惱。涅槃尚不可得，何況生死。是之謂真知見，亦即是真操履也。』

everyday life with the wise discernment of that spontaneous awareness.

In this living practice of Shenhui's, there are no exhortations to do this or not to do that. The practitioners simply act according to need and respond as spoken to. Such a spontaneous living is the fruition as well as the path its practitioners artfully strive for. Practically, such notion can also be understood as an attempt to "bridge the gap between everyday actions and experiences on one hand and religious acts and functions on another,"[51] as Mario Poceski insightfully informs us based on his analysis of a similar practice, namely, the "ordinary mind" teaching of Mazu. As a result, Shenhui's teachings have the effect of expanding the domain of Chan practice to include "such routine acts as eating and putting on the robes."[52] In the expansion,[53] what is important is the "manner" the practitioner takes, the "knowing and seeing" that derives from his or her spontaneous awareness and that infuses his or her whole being without any discriminating thought or dualism.

[51] Poceski, *Ordinary Mind as the Way*, 186.
[52] Ibid.
[53] As some scholars have noticed (see *e.g*., McRae, "Shen-hui and the Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment in Early Ch'an Buddhism," 255 and Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 59-62.), this expansion of the domain of Chan practice may have the effect of blurring the line between the clergy and the laity, thus facilitating the dissemination of Chan among the unordained on the one hand but undermining the rationale behind monastic life on the other. Yet, as Poceski has argued for the case of Mazu's "ordinary mind," for Mazu, the spontaneity of the "ordinary mind" must "be realized within the confines of established monastic mores and institutions," thus enabling its practitioner "to function in specific socioreligious surroundings without being defined or imprisoned by them" (Poceski, *Ordinary Mind as the Way*, 186.). I would argue that, for Shenhui, the spontaneity of his "equal learning" must exhibit similar properties, as its adept must wisely discriminate the surrounding conditions he or she is in, while not giving rise to dualistic thoughts so as to be "defined or imprisoned by them [*i.e*., the surrounding conditions]." In this way, the spontaneity of Shenhui's suddenness actually has the effect of making any line of division flexible while asking its practitioner to act accordingly without any dualistic thoughts, which, on the one hand, prevents the practitioner from any antinomian behavior and, on the other hand, expands the domain of Chan practice into everyday life. To put the argument another way, for Shenhui, perhaps, the only "robe" that matters is the "robe" of one's awakened mind, the True Dharma, that all practitioners, be they ordained or unordained, can don, as long as they prove themselves worthwhile by being in the same category as the enlightened patriarchs. Otherwise, the practitioners of "no-thought" must employ their *prajñā* to wisely discriminate their own surrounding conditions for appropriate actions while keeping the *samādhi* of nonactivating any dualistic thoughts as their guiding principle. In this way, Shenhui's integration of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation transcends all boundaries but at the same time requires its practitioners to act according to their own "specific socioreligious surroundings without being defined or imprisoned by them."

Like an ascending spiral, this "knowing and seeing" that infuses one's being elevates oneself through everyday actions and experiences with the wise discernment of one's spontaneous awareness while firmly centering oneself at the embodiment of one's awakened mind. Yet, since this so-called elevation is an ascent within the indivisible wholeness of one's awakened mind, its movement exhibits no change in nature. Rather, it only changes the practitioner's perspective, specifically, from a partial, dualistic perspective to a holistic, nondual perspective. With this all-encompassing, *gestalt* vision, the practitioner naturally realizes that one's soteriology lies in the present moment with one's ever-lively present awareness to experience the everyday reality in its wholeness. In this way, the practitioner, on the one hand, tries to spontaneously manifest the true nature of one's holistic awakened mind and, on the other hand, prevents oneself from falling into passivity, indifference, or the wild spontaneity of an indulgent and rationalizing ego.[54]

One may argue that the idea of an ascending spiral is a result of mediation, and hence it is in contradiction with the logic of immediacy. A Chan adept would probably answer that the so-called ascending spiral is a result of conceptualization. In reality, it does not exist. As for the individual "moments" of ascending, it is *how* one does in each "moment" that renders it to be a mediation or not, but not *what* one does. That is the reason why Shenhui integrates gradualness in the context of suddenness and why a Chan

[54] This understanding is significant, for it gives another perspective to look at the ethical concern associated with the teaching of spontaneity. It is well known that spontaneity worries some with its implication of *amorality* (see, *e.g.*, Barnard and Kripal (eds), *Crossing Boundaries*; particularly, its Part One sets up the contexts and parameters of related issues). However, does spontaneity necessarily imply amorality? The case I have presented seems to suggest otherwise. Rather, the practitioner takes his or her surrounding conditions into consideration as he or she interacts with others. In addition, in realizing the holistic being of one's awakened mind, the practitioner is aware of conditions and chooses to interact with others in ways that also bring realization to others. Thus, I would argue that the ethics of spontaneity is not fixed in social terms, but presents itself in the mutual benefit of each other's self-realization.

practitioner would always "try"[55] to embody the awakened mind in his or her present awareness as the guiding principle. If one always tries to sympathetically resonate with the true nature of the awakened mind (through one's "knowing and seeing") when doing things,[56] the idea goes that one will eventually unfold one's being im-mediately and spontaneously, just as after shooting at the bull's eye without thinking, one will eventually hit the target.[57]

Moreover, as one tries to sympathetically resonate with the nature of the awakened mind in each moment, it is surely not in the manner of holding on to an ideology, but to vitalize one's "knowing and seeing" in each moment, which synchronously vitalizes one's being even on a relative level (*e.g.*, in terms of vitalizing the sensitivity and flexibility one exhibits when engaging in activities). In this momentarily synchronous vitalization, there is no mediation between one's knowing and one's being, for they interfuse each other to the effect that they co-arise in wholeness, and in this co-arising wholeness of being and knowing, the practitioner rests, or more precisely acts, spontaneously in the suchness of reality with his or her full awareness. At this point, ascending spiral or not is really not the concern, for from the perspective of the all-encompassing wholeness, the practitioner embraces all, absolute and relative, with one's openness, insight, liveliness, and tenderness. Such is what the "knowing and

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55 It is done in the manner of trying without the idea of trying. In other words, it is simply, "Just do it." It is only to indicate that the practitioner is still on a relative level that this rhetoric is used.

56 This is to stay in the context of suddenness while performing gradual cultivation.

57 Chan master Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089-1163) instructed his students, "When a thing comes, one responds spontaneously, just like after learning shooting [at the bull's eye] for a long time, one will eventually hit the target (物來即應，如人學射久久中的矣)" (*Dahui pujue chanshi yulu* 大慧普覺禪師語錄 (*The Recorded Sayings of Chan Master Dahui Pujue*), T. 47 (1998A): 941b1). In Tibetan Dzogchen, there is also a similar analogy for this direct practice. It is said that this direct practice is like directly seeing the gold: "So, it is like to see the gold by just seeing the gold itself rather than looking at the dirt (de bas na gser blta 'dod pa la bong ba bstan pas mi mthong gi/ gser nyid bstan pas ngo shes pa ltar)" (gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 296.4).

seeing" pervading one's being can bring about for its practitioner.

III. Being and Knowing in Wholeness: The Insight Underlying Shenhui's Logic of Immediacy in Contemplation

An interesting question to ask here is: What really underlies the wholeness of being and knowing which the contemplative structure of Shenhui's sudden teaching evidently underscores? Particularly, how does Shenhui's "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā* support this holistic dynamic, and what does this dynamic really imply, contemplatively and soteriologically? Since his "equal learning," contemplatively speaking, also takes the goal as the path, a defining characteristic of the fruitional vehicle (Ch. *guosheng* 果乘; Tib. *'bras bu'i theg pa*), how does this "equal learning" transform Shenhui's sudden Chan into a practice of the fruitional vehicle?

These questions are important, because not only can they offer us an essential piece of the puzzle for our project of understanding the logic of immediacy in contemplation, but they also validate Chan as a fruitional vehicle within the sūtric traditions. I believe that some scholars of the past, mainly due to the reason that Chan is a sūtric tradition, automatically put Chan in the camp of the causal vehicle (Ch. *yinsheng* 因乘; Tib. *rgyu'i theg pa*) without further analysis, and as a result, they misunderstood the teachings of Chan.[58] This issue of Chan being a fruitional vehicle within the sūtric traditions will be also discussed in the later chapters.

[58] For example, Chogyal Namkhai Norbu considers Chan/Zen one of the causal vehicles derived from sūtric Buddhism, whose fundamental method, he has argued, is renunciation (see Norbu, *Dzog Chen and Zen*, 22.). However, from my presentation, it should be clear that renunciation is not a defining characteristic of Chan Buddhism. What Chogyal Namkhai Norbu classifies for Chan/Zen is purely due to his understanding that sūtric traditions and causal vehicles are mutually inclusive. Such a classification without further analysis is problematic, as my analysis has demonstrated. I will discuss this issue more in the later chapters.

A. Shenhui's "Equal Learning" as an Artful Endeavor of the Fruitional Path

Earlier we have presented that Shenhui relies on the idea of sympathetic resonance to implement his fruitional practice in contemplative terms. As a Chan contemplative directly attunes oneself to the *samādhi* of *wunian* (*i.e.*, "no-thought") via the embodiment of the awakened mind in his or her present awareness, the contemplative effectively transforms him/herself to be in the same category as the Buddhas. On this path of directly manifesting the ultimate fruition, the contemplative naturally reveals his or her original awareness endowed with the *prajñā* of spontaneous insight to participate in all everyday actions and experiences.

Here, how does Shenhui's "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā* make sympathetic resonance possible, thus giving rise to his fruitional practice? Essentially, what this question asks is: How can a fruitional practice be philosophically possible? What is the philosophical mechanism that supports the contemplative practice of taking the goal as the path? Regarding these questions, I believe that a possible answer lies in Shenhui's understanding of "equal learning" not only as the equal practices of *samādhi* and *prajñā* but also as the nonduality between them. This nonduality contemplatively establishes a delicate dynamic that practically gives rise to Shenhui's artful endeavor to realize his fruitional path.

But how are *samādhi* and *prajñā* nondual in Shenhui's system? As we know from the above presentation of the "equal learning," for Shenhui, not only are *samādhi* and *prajñā* the natural expressions of one's awakened mind, but they also correspond to the substance (Ch. *ti* 體) and the manifestation (Ch. *yong* 用) of the awakened mind, respectively. As such, *samādhi*, as the *wunian-state* of one's awakened mind, is the

substance of *prajñā*, whereas *prajñā*, as the *original awareness* of one's awakened mind, is the manifestation of *samādhi*. To expound this important relationship, Shenhui uses the analogy of a lamp and its light; he explains,

> *Samādhi* is not different from *prajñā*. *Prajñā* is not different from *samādhi*. They are just like the lamp and its light that are not separate from each other. When the lamp is, it is the substance of [its] light. When the light is, it is the manifestation of the lamp. When the light is, it is not different from the lamp. When the lamp is, it is not different from the light. When the light is, it is not separate from the lamp. When the lamp is, it is not separate from the light. When the light is, the lamp is. When the lamp is, the light is. *Samādhi* and *prajñā* are similar as well. When *samādhi* is, it is the substance of *prajñā*. When *prajñā* is, it is the manifestation of *samādhi*. When *prajñā* is, it is not different from *samādhi*. When *samādhi* is, it is not different from *prajñā*. When *prajñā* is, *samādhi* is. When *samādhi* is, *prajñā* is. When *prajñā* is, *prajñā* is not. When *samādhi* is, *samādhi* is not. This is the simultaneous cultivation of *samādhi* and *prajñā* that are not separate from each other.[59]

So, like a lamp and its light, not only are *samādhi* and *prajñā* not separate from each other, but they are not different from each other, for they co-exist to sustain each other. That is to say, as the lamp exists in terms of its light and vice versa, so do *samādhi* and *prajñā*. Therefore, Shenhui says, "When the light is, it is not different from the lamp. When the lamp is, it is not different from the light. … [Similarly, w]hen *prajñā* is, it is not different from *samādhi*. When *samādhi* is, it is not different from *prajñā*." However, even though they are not different from each other, *samādhi* and *prajñā* cannot be collapsed into one, for one is the substance and the other is its manifestation; they are cognitively different. Thus, it is with the above understanding that *samādhi* and *prajñā*

[59] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 243;『定不異慧，慧不異定，如世間燈光不相去離。即燈之時光家體，即光之時燈家用。即光之時不異燈，即燈之時不異光。即光之時不離燈，即燈之時不離光。即光之時即是燈，即燈之時即是光。定慧亦然。即定之時是慧體，即慧之時是定用。即慧之時不異定， 即定之時不異慧。即慧之時即是定，即定之時即是慧. 即慧之時無有慧，即定之時無有定。此即定慧雙修，不相去離。』

are nondual, particularly, in the sense that they are *neither one nor two* (Ch. *buyi buer* 不一不二).

Soteriologically, the nonduality between *samādhi* and *prajñā* in Shenhui's "equal learning" creates a delicate dynamic that makes the practice of taking the goal as the path possible; essentially it makes the goal and its path nondual. This dynamic, however, would not exist if Shenhui makes *samādhi* and *prajñā* into a oneness, for there is no "kinetic energy" in the sameness, and without such energy, there can be no dynamic. On the other hand, when *samādhi* and *prajñā* are neither one nor two, a certain subtle energy that enables the movement, a delicate dynamic, within the indivisible wholeness of one's awakened mind is implicit. In that way, it is possible for Shenhui to talk about gradual cultivation within the context of sudden awakening and for Zongmi to interpret Shenhui's awakening as to transforming an "awakening via understanding" into an "awakening via realization," while keeping both awakenings within the holistic state of one's awakened mind.[60]

Furthermore, for Shenhui, the subtle energy derived from the nonduality between *samādhi* and *prajñā*, (and the nonduality of the goal and its path), cannot be grasped with one's intentional effort, for the conceptuality of any intentional effort "strains" the effortlessness of the awakened mind, thus straining the said subtlety too. Rather, the subtle energy can only be utilized when the practitioner spontaneously instills a

[60] Following this argument, I believe that not only does the delicate dynamic derived from the nonduality between *samādhi* and *prajñā* make gradual cultivation to be possible within the context of sudden awakening, but it also does not reject the skillful means of gradualism within the context of subitism. Thus, in the delicate dynamic between *samādhi* and *prajñā*, subitism does not reject skillful means, does not collapse the two levels of ultimate and conventional truths into one, but consists in seizing them simultaneously in a way like that of a lamp and its light. This understanding of Chan's subitism is very different from that of Bernard Faure's. Basically, Faure's understanding of Chan's subitism is that it reduces the conventional to the ultimate and rejects the use of skillful means; see Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, Chapter Three (53-78).

no-thought state in his or her present awareness so that the practitioner participates in all activities without stagnation and confusion while deeply abiding in the state of complete tranquility. Such an artful endeavor is the virtue of Shenhui's "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā* and the force to realize his fruitional path.

B. The Nondual, Holistic Dynamic between **Samādhi**-*Being and* **Prajñā**-*Knowing*

To further understand the delicate, nondual dynamic between *samādhi* and *prajñā* that actualizes Shenhui's artful endeavor, one should also recognize that ultimately, the nondual dynamic under investigation is really a *dynamic stillness*, as it occurs within the indivisible wholeness of one's awakened mind. But this dynamic stillness, paradoxically, is endowed with an infinite liveliness that is associated with the original awareness of the awakened mind. To explore its other implications including the aforementioned infinite liveliness, let us further delve into the nondual dynamic predicated on Shenhui's "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā.*

First, as Shenhui's *samādhi* and *prajñā* are each other's substance and manifestation, *samādhi*, as the *wunian* state of one's awakened mind, embodies the *substantial-state* or *ontological being* of *prajñā*, whereas *prajñā*, as the original awareness of one's awakened mind, manifests the *appearing-awareness* or *epistemological knowing* of *samādhi.* Given these ontological and epistemological associations, Shenhui's *samādhi* and *prajñā* can be philosophically understood as *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing. This philosophical understanding, along with the nonduality between *samādhi* and *prajñā*, evidently testifies to a nondual relationship that consists of both ontological and epistemological aspects, a property similar to what is shown in Klein's three types of nondualism but different from Loy's characterization of nonduality only as an epistemological description discussed in

the Introduction of the dissertation.

Moreover, since "[w]hen *prajñā* is, *samādhi* is [and] [w]hen *samādhi* is, *prajñā* is," *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing therefore reflexively sustain each other. Practically, this mutually sustaining dynamic essentially informs us that the original awareness of *prajñā* naturally facilitates its practitioner to discern his or her participation in all activities without any deluded thoughts, thus spontaneously sustaining the *wunian* state of *samādhi*, which reflexively sustains the original awareness of *prajñā*. As a result, the mutually sustaining dynamic brings about the aforementioned infinite liveliness that constantly vitalizes its practitioner's present awareness so as to fulfill the soteriological goal of the fruitional path with artful effortlessness.[61]

In the nondual dynamic of *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing, there also exists a logic of spontaneity. For Shenhui, as *samādhi* is, *prajñā* is. This terse statement, in his contemplative teachings, can be understood as follows. That is, as one abides in the state of *wunian*, one's original awareness spontaneously presents itself to "wisely discern" (Ch. *shan fenbie* 善分別) all that is present. But, for Shenhui, there is more. That is, as *prajñā* is, *samādhi* is too. Here, I believe, Shenhui is telling us that as the spontaneous presence of one's original awareness naturally occurs, it effortlessly embodies the state of *wunian* too. Thus, in this reflexive, or more precisely circular, dynamic of *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing, there is neither beginning nor ending. And, any effort of intentionality is incompatible with this circular dynamic, for effort has beginning and intentionality has

[61] As *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing correspond to each other's substance and manifestation, their reinforcing dynamic also indicates that not only do substance and manifestation have no mediation, but they also spontaneously sustain each other. This characterization of the relationship between substance and manifestation (or function) is different from that of Bernard Faure's understanding, for he writes, "In a sense, Mazu's Chan marked a return to gradualism, since it no longer advocated seeing one's true nature im-mediately, but mediately, through its function" (Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 51). Thus, for Faure, there is always mediation between substance and manifestation. Yet, such mediation does not exist in our reinforcing dynamic between *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing.

direction. Accordingly, one can only embrace this circular dynamic in its wholeness and with its own logic of spontaneous presence. Intrinsically, in this spontaneous wholeness of *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing, *being knows* and *knowing is.*

What *being knows*, together with what *knowing is*, implies that there exists an interpenetrating dynamic between being and knowing, a kind of "mutual interfusion" between ontology and epistemology. In Shenhui's contemplative terminology, it is that, on the one hand, the *wunian* state of *samādhi*-being enfolds epistemological qualities and, on the other hand, the original awareness of *prajñā*-knowing exhibits ontological status; they mutually sustain and permeate each other. Given this understanding, Shenhui's "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā* actually dissolves the boundaries of *samādhi* and *prajñā*. That is the reason why he teaches, "When *prajñā* is, *prajñā* is not. When *samādhi* is, *samādhi* is not." Under this dissolution, or more precisely mutual interfusion or permeation, then, what is *prajñā* and what is *samādhi*? For Shenhui, it can only be their "equal learning," a wholeness embracing their nonduality as well as their own logic of spontaneity. In this embracing wholeness, *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing cannot be collapsed into one. Yet, they cannot be separate from each other, either. This is like a lamp and its light, which, even though consisting of a whole, are cognitively different, but they can never be separate from each other, both ontologically and epistemologically.

Furthermore, the mutual interfusion or permeation that occurs between one's being and one's knowing essentially integrates the three types of nondualism in Klein's typology into an integral whole.[62] That is to say, the embracing wholeness of one's being and knowing depicts a holography of nondual relationships with respect to objects,

[62] For Klein's discussion on the three types of nondualism, see Klein, *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen*, 151-158.

between oneself and others, and between one's present self and future Buddhahood. Put another way, as one realizes that *samādhi-being knows* and *prajñā-knowing is*, objective and subjective separations will be dissolved in the non-substantiality of *śūnyatā*, thus realizing both ontological nondualism and cognitive nondualism. As the nonduality of *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing takes one to traverse in the indivisible wholeness of one's awakened mind, one realizes that the division between one's present seemingly unenlightened state and one's future resumed enlightened state actually comes from a mistaken epistemological reification. Having corrected the epistemological mistake, one recognizes their nonduality or what Klein refers to as evolutionary nondualism. Thus, in the mutual interfusion of one's being and knowing, all opposites and contradictions are resolved in a unique manner of knowing or what I call the *prajñā*-knowing in the sudden Chan of Shenhui. As the spontaneous presence of this *prajñā*-knowing is nondual with the ultimate *samādhi*-being, the mutual interfusion and permeation of one's being and knowing thus distinctively tells us that there can be no "abstract truth" divorced from one's subjective engagement. However, since the subjective engagement of one's *prajñā*-knowing is said to "act according to need and respond as spoken to," such a reality-fitting engagement would surely not give rise to the arbitrariness of cultural or moral relativism.

The mutual interfusion of *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing, for Shenhui, takes place ubiquitously. Accordingly, Chan practitioners should cultivate themselves firmly based on this understanding. So, in his *Zhengyi*, when a certain official minister asks him, "Is an ordinary person like me able to learn your teaching of *wunian*?" Shenhui responds,

> Today I permit Minister to learn this teaching. Even though you have not begun to practice, as long as you obtain a realizing understanding, due to the transforming power of lastingly immersing [yourself] in this realizing understanding, all strong attachments and deluded

> thoughts will naturally and gradually become diminished.[63]

Some may argue that the above response of Shenhui's is for the purpose of proselytizing the minister. So, Shenhui deemphasizes the importance of lasting effort on this path of spiritual practice. Nevertheless, it could also be argued that, due to the mutual interfusion and permeation of one's being and knowing, for Shenhui, the power of one's realizing knowing can unmediatedly and spontaneously transform the state of one's being and vice versa. This interpretation is also in accord with Shenhui's unequivocal emphasis of the spontaneous quality of *wunian*; it is only through sympathetic resonance that one attains the state of *wunian*, not some arduous effort. Clearly, in another place of his *Zhengyi*, Shenhui points out this effortless spontaneity of realizing knowing:

> All cultivators, for those who are still on the ground of learning, when the mind activates thoughts, just illuminate them with [one's] awareness. When the mind of activation disappears, the illumination of awareness self perishes as well. This is [the state of] *wunian.*[64]

No arduous effort is needed, but not laxity either. Rather, it is the natural power of one's awakened mind. With its unconditional spontaneity, there is a delicate balance between action and inaction. Attachments and deluded thoughts, even though empty of inherent existence, do not disappear of their own accord. Something must be done. If *being knows* and *knowing is*, does this "something" not lie, unmediatedly and spontaneously, in *your awareness*?

[63] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 101;『今日許侍郎學解，未得修行，但得知解，以知解久薰習故，一切攀緣妄想，所有重者，自漸輕微。』

[64] Hu, *Shenhui heshang yiji*, 308-309;『諸善知識，若在學地者，心若有念起，即便覺照。起心即滅，覺照自亡，即是無念。』

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Being and Knowing in Wholeness

Chinese Chan, Tibetan Dzogchen, and the Logic of Immediacy in Contemplation

Volume II

by

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PART II

An Encounter Narrative and Variations of the Logic of Immediacy: The Cases of sTon mun and Tibetan Dzogchen

Chapter 3. sTon mun as a Tradition of Encounter: A Missing Link between Chan and Dzogchen?

Following the historical footsteps of Chan monks westwards, Part II of the dissertation begins with an encounter narrative that depicts a "conversation" between practitioners of immediacy from different quarters of the religious-philosophizing spectrum. This narrative strategy is to illustrate the variations of the logic of immediacy in contemplation through different case studies. It also tries to show the complex historical trajectories of these variations and the way the contemplative participants, Chinese and Tibetan, shaped them independently and/or in conversation. In effect, what is meant to convey via this strategy is that the logic of immediacy in contemplation is not an isolated phenomenon. It had emerged, and thus can emerge, with different emphases in different times and places. This understanding of independent developments essentially indicates the significance of the idea of immediacy for the contemplatives and signifies a special status for such idea in the history of religious and/or contemplative teachings as well.

In particular, Chapter 3 presents a historical narrative of connection which tries to find clues that may link Chan and Dzogchen. I do so by taking the contemplative recipient's perspective to investigate the syncretic development of sTon mun[1] or Cig car ba,[2] a tradition resulting from the interactions between Chan monks and Tibetan tantric

[1] Etymologically, *ston* is a Tibetan transliteration of Chinese term *dun* 頓 or "sudden" and *mun* a Tibetan transliteration for Chinese *men* 門 or "door/gate." Thus, sTon mun, literally "sudden gate" or "sudden school," refers to the teachings of suddenness, as opposed to Tsen men (or Tsen man) 漸門, litereally "gradual gate" or "gradual school," that refers to the teachings of gradualness.

[2] In discussing the development and teachings of Tibetan Chan, scholars have referred to the tradition as Tibetan Chan Schools (see, *e.g*., Broughton, "Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet"), sTon mun (*i.e*., the Sudden School; see, *e.g*., Obata, "Kodai chibetto ni okeru tonmonpa (zenshū) no nagare 古代チベットにおける頓門派(禅宗)の流れ (The Development of the Sudden School (Zen School) in Ancient Tibet)"), or Cig car ba (*i.e*., the Simultaneists; see, *e.g*., Karmay, *The Great Perfection*) in the past. As I am using gNubs

practitioners at the borders of Tang-Song China and Tibet of the 8th-10th centuries. Mainly based on Dunhuang manuscripts including Tibetan translations of Chan texts (*e.g.*, PT 116/8, PT 823/1, ITJ 710/2), compilations of Chan treatises and oral commentaries (*e.g.*, PT 116 and ITJ 709), and original Tibetan compositions (*e.g.*, PT 116/5, PT 626, PT 634, PT 699, PT 818, ITJ 689 and ITJ 709/9),[3] and some early Nyingma texts such as gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's (c. 832-943) *bSam gtan mig sgron* (*The Lamp for the Eye of Dhyāna*)[4] and Vimalamitra's (c. 8th century) *Cig car 'jug pa rnam par mi rtog pa'i*

chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's *bSam gtan mig sgron* as the primary source for my study, following its convention, I will refer to the tradition as sTon mun throughout our discussion. An a note, while *ston mun* is a Tibetan transliteration of the Chinese term *dun-men* 頓門, *cig car* is believed to be a Tibetan translation of the Chinese term *dun* or suddenness.

[3] As noted in the Introduction of this dissertation, since most of the Dunhuang manuscripts either do not have titles or consist of collections of several texts or are fragmentary, these manuscripts are usually identified with their catalogue numbers. Most of the Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts are collected in the Pelliot collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and in the Stein collection in the British Library in London. I have followed Sam van Schaik's convention (see van Schaik, "The Early Days of the Great Perfection") to denote the former PT and the latter ITJ. Thus, PT 699 refers to Item 699 in the Pelliot collection, whereas ITJ 689 refers to Item 689 in the Stein collection. As many Dunhuang manuscripts are composed of several texts, PT 116/8 thus refers to the 8th text identified in the manuscript PT 116; PT 823/1 refers to the 1st text in the manuscript PT 823; and so forth. For a description of the Stein collection of Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts (*i.e.*, manuscripts identified with the ITJ prefix), see Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Stein Collection at the British Library*. For a description of the Pelliot collection of Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts (*i.e.*, manuscripts identified with the PT prefix), see Wang, *Facang dunhuang zangwen wenxian jieti mulu* 法藏敦煌藏文文獻解題目錄 (*A Descriptive Catalogue of Dunhuang Tibetan Manuscripts in The Bibliothèque Nationale de France*).

[4] Probably the first Nyingma master historically known to us to systematically present the Dzogchen teachings, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes has been a subject of various studies. Yet, due to the scarcity of definitive historical records, the dates of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes and of the composition of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* are still very much in dispute. According to one historical account, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes was born in the year of 832 CE and lived for 111 years (Dudjom Rinpoche, *The rNying ma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, 607-614), but other accounts place his birth year to be 772 CE, the late 10th century, and so forth. Accordingly, the composition of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* has been placed in *circa* the late 9th century (according to the birth year of 772 CE), the first quarter of the 10th century (van Schaik, "The Early Days of the Great Perfection," 178), or the late 10th century (Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 102). For early studies of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, see, *e.g.*, Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 86-120; Otogawa, "*Zenjō tōmyō ron* kenkyū 1: *Zenjō tōmyō ron, Mushotoku ippō ron, Daiyuga shūshū gi* 『禅定灯明論』研究 (1) —『禅定灯明論』、『無所得一法論』、『大瑜伽修習義』 (A Study of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (1): *bSam gtan mig sgron, dMigs su med pa tshul gcig pa'i gzhung*, and *rNal 'byor chen por sgom ba'i don*)"; "*Zenjō tōmyō ron* kenkyū 2: Dai 5 shō (tonmonpa shō) no kōsei 『禅定灯明論』研究 (2)—第五章 (頓門派章) の構成 (A Study of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (2): On the Structure of the Fifth Chapter (sTon mun cig car 'jug pa)"; and "*Zenjō tōmyō ron* kenkyū 3: Indo, Chūgoku, Chibetto no bunken ni mirareru zenjōhō wo megutte 『禅定灯明論』研究 (3) — インド、中国、チベットの文献に見られ

bsgom don (*The Meaning of the Cultivation of Simultaneous Entrance to the Non-conceptuality*),[5] I explore the syncretic development of sTon mun via a structural analysis of how early Tibetan Buddhists carried out their works of translation, compilation, and interpretation in relation to Chan teachings.

In the analysis, I will show that not only was sTon mun, syncretic in nature, but the Tibetan practitioners of sTon mun considered the contemplative teachings and practices of Chan and proto-Dzogchen compatible; that is, they all follow a similar logic for contemplation, *i.e.*, the principles of suddenness and spontaneity. Consequently, trying to include as many insights from similar traditions as possible, these practitioners integrated the two teachings, which, on the one hand, created a unique syncretic integration and, on the other hand, led to the absorption of sTon mun, thus its disappearance, within the broader tantric milieu of Tibet. In the framework of Wilfred C. Smith's idea of a cumulative religious tradition,[6] the disappearance of sTon mun as an independent tradition in Tibet can thus be seen as a result of the continuous creation process of the Dzogchen tradition.

る禅定法をめぐって (A Study of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (3): A Survey on Meditation Techniques in the Literature of India, China, and Tibet)"; Miyazaki, "*Zenjō tōmyō ron* kenmonpa shō nitsuite 『禅定灯明論』漸門派章について (On the Gradualist Chapter of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*)"; Dalton and van Schaik, "Lighting the Lamp"; Meinert, "Structural Analysis of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*"; Miyazaki Izumi, "The Gradualist Chapter of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* and the Teaching of Kamalaśīla."

[5] Along with Padmasambhava and Vairocana, Vimalamitra has been recognized as one of the first three masters who brought the teachings of Dzogchen to Tibet in the end of the eighth century. For an account of Vimalamitra's life story, see *e.g.*, Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 68-73. For the role Vimalamitra may have played in the early history of Nyingma transmissions, see, *e.g.*, Germano, "The Seven Descents and the Early History of Rnying Ma Transmissions," 241-248. For a study of *Cig car 'jug pa rnam par mi rtog pa'i bsgom don*, see, *e.g.*, Gómez, "Indian Materials on the Doctrine of Sudden Enlightenment," and Shen, "Wugouyou zunzhe ji qi suozao *Dunru wufenbie xiuxi yi* yanjiu 無垢友尊者及其所造《頓入無分別修習義》研究 (A Study on Master Vimalamitra and his *Cig car 'jug pa rnam par mi rtog pa'i bsgom don*)."

[6] See Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion*, 139-153.

I. Early Studies and Methodological Concerns

With the help of Dunhuang manuscripts, both in Chinese and Tibetan, scholars have made significant progress in understanding early interactions between Chinese Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism.[7] Particularly, because of the discovery of Tibetan Chan manuscripts, which are either translated from Chinese sources or originally written in Tibetan, the development of Chan in Tibet has been a fruitful area of study since the early 1970s.[8] The subjects of these studies include:[9] (1) contents of specific manuscripts, (2) teachings of certain Chan masters, (3) Tibetan translations of Chinese Chan texts and histories, (4) issues related to the Council of Tibet (c. 792-794), and (5) development and teachings of Tibetan Chan School.

A. What We Know about the Formation of sTon mun from Early Studies

On the development and teachings of Chan in Tibet, as reviewed in the Introduction

[7] See, *e.g.*, Whalen Lai and Lewis Lancaster's edited volume entitled *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet* and the references therein.

[8] As Ueyama Daishun notices in his paper "The Study of Tibetan Ch'an Manuscripts Recovered from Tun-huang: A Review of the Field and its Prospects," although studies on Tibetan Chan were done quite early in Europe, their importance was not recognized until the 70s. These early studies include: Marcelle Lalou, "Document tibétain sur l'expansion du dhyana chinois" (1939), Paul Demiéville, *Le Coucile de Lhasa* (1952), Giuseppe Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts II* (1958), and R. A. Stein, "Illumination subite on saisie simultanée, not sur la terminologie chinoise et tibétaine" (1969). Since the early 70s, studies using the Dunhuang Tibetan Chan manuscripts have been dominated by Japanese scholars. For a review of the field and its prospects, see Ueyama Daishun's paper entitled "The Study of Tibetan Ch'an Manuscripts Recovered from Tun-huang: A Review of the Field and its Prospects" in Lai and Lancaster's edited volume *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet.*

[9] For Japanese references on these areas, see Ueyama, "The Study of Tibetan Ch'an Manuscripts Recovered from Tun-huang: A Review of the Field and its Prospects." For English references on these areas, see, *e.g.*, Lai and Lancaster (ed), *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet*; Broughton, "Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet"; Gómez, "The Direct and the Gradual Approaches of Zen Master Mahāyāna: Fragments of the Teachings of Mo-ho-yen"; Stein, "Sudden Illumination or Simultaneous Comprehension: Remarks on Chinese and Tibetan Terminology"; Tanaka and Robertson, "A Ch'an Text from Tun-huang: Implications for Ch'an Influence on Tibetan Buddhism"; Faber, "A Tibetan Dunhuang Treatise on Simultaneous Enlightenment: The *dMyigs su myed pa tshul gcig pa'i gzhung*"; Otokawa, "New Fragments of the *rNal 'byor chen por bsgom pa'i don* from Tabo"; Meinert, "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs-chen*: Preliminary Remarks on Two Tibetan Dunhuang manuscripts"; and van Schaik and Dalton, "Where Chan and Tantra Meet: Tibetan Syncretism in Dunhuang." Also, see footnote 25 of the Introduction (of this dissertation) for studies on the Council of Tibet.

of this dissertation, among the scholars of past studies there exist three major perspectives regarding the relationship between Chan and Dzogchen of the 8th-10th centuries. Along with the perspectives of a direct influence from Chan to Dzogchen and Chan and Dzogchen as the respective innovations of Chinese and Tibetans, the third perspective argues for a more complicated relationship, which David Germano synoptically states, "Given their striking similarities as well as the references to Chan in Nyingma literature, it would be very odd if the Great Perfection [*i.e.*, Dzogchen] was not significantly influenced by its dialogues with Chan, even if its original genesis and primary impetus is to be located elsewhere."[10]

Indeed, recent studies using Dunhuang manuscripts have confirmed that early Tibetan Buddhists, especially at the border areas such as Dunhuang and Sichuan, syncretically integrated Chan ideas with proto-Dzogchen and/or Mahāyoga tantric teachings.[11] Due to their doctrinal resemblance, these early Tibetan contemplatives were probably associated with the tradition of sTon mun or the "Sudden School" that, according to gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's *bSam gtan mig sgron*, started as a descendent of Chinese Chan lineages.[12] Yet, the teachings and practitioners of sTon mun

[10] Germano, "Architecture and Absence in the Secret Tantric History of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*)," 217.

[11] See Meinert, "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs-chen*: Preliminary Remarks on Two Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts" and van Schaik and Dalton, "Where Chan and Tantra Meet: Tibetan Syncretism in Dunhuang." Also, see my review of these papers in the Introduction of this dissertation.

[12] In his *bSam gtan mig sgron*, gNubs chen clearly identifies that sTon mun was passed down through a session of patriarchs from Kaśyapa (Tib. *'od srungs*) down to Darmodhara or Bodhidarmotara (*i.e.*, Bodhidharma 菩提達摩 (d. 536?)) and to the seventh Chinese patriarch Hashang Mahāyāna (*i.e.*, Moheyan 摩訶衍 (c. 8th-9th centuries)); see gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 15.2-3. This genealogy, according to various studies, was known to Tibetan Buddhists through an early sectarian Chan history called the *Lidai fabao ji* 歷代法寶記 (*The Record of the Dharma-Jewel Through the Generations*) probably written by members of Jingzhong 淨眾 and Baotang 保唐 Sects of the Chan School in the Sichuan area around the 8th century; see, *e.g.*, Obata, "Chibetto no zenshū to rekidai hōbōki チベットの禅宗と『歴代法宝記』 (The Zen School of Tibet and *Lidai fabao ji*)" and Ademak, *The Mystique of Transmission.*

were certainly not limited to the Chinese. As a tradition of encounter, since its early days sTom mun was syncretic in nature,[13] for its followers consisted of Chinese, Tibetans, and even Central Asians, and its teachings were thus assimilated from Chinese, Tibetan, and Central Asian materials.

Specifically, on the formation of sTon mun, Japanese scholar Obata Hironobu was one of the first to make significant contributions. His paper entitled "Kodai chibetto ni okeru tonmonha (zenshū) no nagare (The Development of the Sudden School (Zen School) in Ancient Tibet)," even though written in 1976, is still one of the most up-to-date papers depicting the possible history and major doctrinal characteristics of sTon mun. Since other studies including Broughton's "Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet" and Gómez's "The Direct and the Gradual Approaches of Zen Master Mahāyāna" have similar conclusions, below I will only summarize Obata's findings to illustrate what we know about the formation of sTon mun.

In particular, based on its doctrinal characteristics, Obata argues that sTon mun, as a system representing Tibetan Chan, could not be identified with any single Chan sect in China. Rather, building upon the teachings from Moheyan 摩訶衍 (c. 8th-9th centuries), Bodhidharma 菩提達摩 (d. 536?) and his disciples, the Northern Chan Sect, the Southern Chan of Heze Shenhui 荷澤神會 (684-758), and the Jingzhong 淨眾 and Baotang 保唐 Sects, sTon mun also included teachings believed to belong to the later

[13] Although the idea of "a pure religion" that does not change in form with socioreligious conditions is problematic, the idea of syncretism is still contentious. For many, not only does it connote a sense of mixture, but, to some, it even implies a sense of in-authenticity or contamination. Nevertheless, as far as the idea that changes are inevitable goes, a "syncretic" tradition seems to be a natural result in relation to historical development. For issues related to syncretism, see, *e.g.*, Steward and Shaw (ed), *Syncretism/Anti-Syncretism: The Politics of Religious Synthesis* and Gort, Vroom, Fernhout, and Wessels (ed), *Dialogue and Syncretism: An Interdisciplinary Approach.*

Nyingma School and some unknown Central Asian traditions.[14] Obata mainly attributes the formation of this doctrinal syncretism to two currents,[15] namely, that of Moheyan, who represented the sTon mun position in the Council of Tibet, and that of Jingzhong Wuxiang 淨眾無相 (684-762) and Baotang Wuchu 保唐無住 (714-774) whose teachings, primarily represented in the *Lidai fabao ji* 歷代法寶記 (*The Record of the Dharma-Jewel Through the Generations*),[16] were brought to Tibet (from Sichuan) via a route through the Kingdom of Nanzhao 南詔國 (649-902) in as early as the first half of the eighth century.[17]

In addition, Obata conjectures that it was Moheyan, who, for the purpose of legitimization and easy propagation, conveniently adapted the already-present lineage of the Baotang School recorded in the *Lidai fabao ji* to disseminate his sudden teachings to his Tibetan followers.[18] As a result of this strategic movement, Moheyan not only facilitated but also greatly contributed to the establishment of the aforementioned syncretism. In the end of his paper, Obata concludes that based on the results of previous studies, the teachings of sTon mun after Moyehan were then integrated into the Dzogchen teachings of the Nyingmapa.[19]

Clearly, it can be said that Obata's approach to the formation of sTon mun, a representative of most early studies on the subject, is done purely from *the disseminator's*

[14] Obata, "Kodai chibetto ni okeru tonmonpa (zenshū) no nagare," 65.
[15] Ibid, 77-79.
[16] An early sectarian Chan history, the *Lidai fabao ji* was probably written by members of Jingzhong and Baotang Sects of the Chan School in the Sichuan area around the 8th century. According to various studies, it was probably through the *Lidai fabao ji* that early Tibetan Buddhists learned the Chan genealogy recorded in gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's *bSam gtan mig sgron* referred to earlier; for detailed studies, see Obata, "Chibetto no zenshū to rekidai hōbōki" and Ademak, *The Mystique of Transmission.*
[17] Obata, "Kodai chibetto ni okeru tonmonpa (zenshū) no nagare ," 61-64.
[18] Ibid, 79.
[19] Ibid.

perspective. That is to say, he pays most of the attention to those who were disseminating the teachings and what lineages and/or traditions they belonged to. Thus, he focuses, on the one hand, on Jingzhong Wuxiang and Baotang Wuchu and their teachings in the *Lidai fabao ji* and, on the other hand, on Moheyan and his teachings in the *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue* 頓悟大乘正理決 (*The Verification of Sudden Awakening in the Mahāyāna;* hereafter *Zhengli jue*).[20] Furthermore, he hypothesizes that it was Moheyan, the Chinese disseminator, who initiated the syncretic movement by taking the lineage of the Baotang School as his own to help legitimize and propagate his teachings.

B. Methodology: A Perspective Derived from the Contemplative Recipients

While Obata's proposal may provide a possible solution to how the teachings of sTon mun came together from the various Chinese Chan sources, his approach does not resolve the issues related to the other syncretic characteristics of sTon mun such as its incorporation of the teachings uniquely found in the later Nyingma School and its integration of the mind-nature teaching with proto-Dzogchen ideas or Mahāyoga tantric visualizations as shown in Dunhuang manuscripts like ITJ 689, PT 699, PT 626, and PT 634. As discussed in the Introduction, the contents of manuscripts ITJ 689, PT 699, PT 626, and PT 634 not only confirm that Chan teachings were circulated among early Tibetan tantric Buddhists. More importantly, they also demonstrate that it was Tibetan Buddhists, the recipients, rather than Chan masters, the disseminators, who syncretically integrated Chan ideas with proto-Dzogchen and/or Mahāyoga teachings within their broader tantric context. This understanding effectively tells us that a methodology that incorporates *the recipient's perspective* not only may be a corrective to approaches like

[20] Ibid, 73-77. For a study on the *Zhengli jue*, see, *e.g.*, Paul Demiéville, *Le Coucile de Lhasa* (1952).

Obata's that merely underscore the disseminator's perspective. It may indeed be more appropriate to take the recipient's perspective to examine the development of a religious tradition, such as Chan in China or sTon mun in Tibet, which was first brought in by foreign teachers but later developed by local practitioners.

As presented in the Introduction, generally speaking, the disseminators would be more doctrinal, authoritative, and sectarian, whereas the recipients, particularly the contemplative recipients, would be more practical, inclusive, and less sectarian-oriented. This is because, while trying best to figure out what it is exactly that they are receiving, the contemplative recipients, due to their special interest in practice, would pay more attention to how to best incorporate new ideas without limiting themselves to sectarian boundaries to achieve their contemplative project. Even though the recipients may later become the disseminators (suggesting that the line between the two categories is moving and flexible),[21] since their contemplative concerns have been taken into account to shape the tradition, these unique concerns would still be influential and even carried further into the later development of the tradition. It is with this understanding that the perspective derived from the contemplative recipients can offer a vantage point to better highlight not only the contemplative concerns but also the assimilation mechanism that may be at work behind the formation of a religious tradition. These highlighted elements have usually been undervalued, or even neglected, by studies that only take the disseminator's perspective in the past. Yet, as we see that the line separating the categories of recipients and disseminators is flexible, thus my presentation below will also try to bring the two

[21] As noted in the Introduction of this dissertation, not only are the characterizations of the disseminator and the recipient not absolute, but in reality it is very possible for a practitioner to play the roles of the disseminator and the recipient simultaneously and/or under different scenarios, which is evident in the discussion below.

perspectives into play.

Moreover, the contemplative recipient's perspective I will take to examine the development of sTon mun will also underscore that at the time when Tibetan contemplatives were receiving the teachings of sTon mun, they were also exposed to the doctrines of Mahāyoga tantras and proto-Dzogchen. Although the syncretic nature of this religious milieu complicated, but perhaps also made possible, the process through which these Tibetan contemplatives assimilated the teachings, it also demanded their immediate and specific responses that shaped their understandings. As a result, depending on their doctrinal propensities, different groups or persons would take different strategies to organize or integrate the various Buddhist teachings they received to accomplish their specific religious and/or contemplative goals. Below I will try to demonstrate that during their assimilation, not only did Tibetan contemplative recipients not commit themselves to sectarian boundaries, but they further organized these Buddhist tenets and practices in at least two different ways, namely, (1) hierarchically classifying the teachings as illustrated in gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's *bSam gtan mig sgron* and (2) syncretically integrating the view of sTon mun, mainly its idea of directly accessing one's innately awakened mind, with Mahāyoga and/or proto-Dzogchen meditative teachings and practices as illustrated in the Dunhuang manuscripts of ITJ 689, PT 699, PT 626, and PT 634.

II. The Syncretic Development of sTon mun in Tibet

Given the above contemplative recipient's perspective, I would like to further explore the syncretic development of sTon mun in Tibet by performing a structural analysis of how early Tibetan Buddhists carried out their works of translation,

compilation, and interpretation in relation to Chan teachings. In the analysis of these works, I will show that the effort of Tibetan contemplatives was syncretic in nature, indicating that these contemplative recipients, probably due to their practical concerns, were not sectarian-bounded. Therefore, they were comfortable to simultaneously practice teachings of different sectarian sources including Chan, Mahāyoga, and proto-Dzogchen. Meanwhile, trying best to understand these newly received teachings, they either hierarchically classified these teachings or syncretically integrated them together. In the syncretic integration, what made the assimilation possible was that the contemplative teachings of Chan and proto-Dzogchen were found compatible. Particularly, they followed the similar principles of suddenness and spontaneity for contemplation. In this way, sTon mun emerged, developed, and then disappeared in its own syncretic integration within the Tibetan broader tantric environment during the 8^{th}-10^{th} centuries.[22]

In weaving the composite tapestry of sTon mun's development highlighting the syncretic contemplative concerns of Tibetan Buddhist recipients, what needs to be recognized however is that a detailed trajectory of sTon mun's historical development is still difficult to chart as the primary materials on the subject are too scarce. Accordingly, what is presented below are only some of the major characteristics concerning the syncretic development of sTon mun primarily depicted based on the literary and doctrinal structures of its associated texts. The contents and significance of its contemplative teachings will be the subject of our next chapter.

[22] This broader tantric environment was probably made possible by unregulated traveling yogis after the breakdown of the Yarlung government's control (c. 848). On the role unregulated traveling yogis may played in popularizing tantric teachings during the "dark period" of Tibetan history, see, *e.g.*, Germano, "The Seven Descents and the Early History of rNying ma Transmissions," 258-259.

A. *The Various Translations of Chan Teachings: A Diversified sTon mun Beginning Supported by Tibetan Contemplatives of Different Backgrounds*

Needless to say, translation was the first step Tibetan Buddhist recipients took in trying to learn and understand the teachings of a foreign tradition like sTon mun. From the many Tibetan translations of Chan-related sūtras and texts demonstrated below, sTon mun could be argued as a tradition with a diversified beginning, in which multiple groups of Tibetan contemplatives participated. Yet, how did this diversified beginning commence? Who were these early Tibetan practitioners of sTon mun? Why did they translate Chinese Chan literature into Tibetan, and why did they choose those specific sūtras and texts?

As far as history goes, it can be said that Tibetan Buddhism began in an environment of multiple teachings. Since the time when the King Khri srong lde brtsan (r. 755-797) first adopted Buddhism, probably in the year of 762, Tibetan practitioners were exposed to various Buddhist tenets and practices. Among them, for example, there were the teachings of sTon mun, the Simultaneist Chinese Chan, and those of Tsen men, the Gradualist Indian Madhyamaka, that comprised the Council of Tibet. There were also the teachings of Mahāyoga tantras that sparked concerns over their sexual and violent practices.[23] It was under this kind of religiously thriving environment that, according to the early Tibetan history of *dBa'/sBa bzhed* (*The Annals of sBa Family*), Tibetan Buddhists first received Chinese Chan teachings from Master Gyim Hwa shang (*i.e.*, Jingzhong Wuxiang).[24] Most probably owing to his influence, the history book, *Lidai fabao ji*, associated with the Chan School of Jingzhong-Baotang Sects in Sichuan was

[23] See, *e.g.*, Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 4-6 and Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, 443.
[24] Wangdu and Diemberger (trans), *dBa' bzhed*, 47-52.

translated into Tibetan, which greatly facilitated the sudden awakening teaching of Chan to be transmitted, perhaps for the first time, in the lands of Tibet in written form.[25]

To further understand the Chan teachings expounded in the *Lidai fabao ji*, according to Obata's research, early Tibetan Buddhists also translated the Chan-related sūtras, such as *Jingang sanmei jing* 金剛三昧經 (Skt. *Vajrasamādhi-sūtra*; Tib. *rDo rje'i ting nge 'dzin gyi mdo*), *Fawang jing* 法王經 (Skt. *Saddharmarāja-sūtra*; Tib. *Chos kyi rgyal po'i mdo*), and *Shou lengyan jing* 首楞嚴經 (Skt. *Mahoṣṇīṣa-sūtra*; Tib. *gTsug tor chen po'i mdo*).[26] These sūtras are listed in the *lDan dkar ma* catalogue (c. 824), and, judging from their use of nonstandard terminologies, they were probably translated before the compilation of *Mahāvyutpatti* that was started in the reign of Khri lDe srong btsan (804-815) and finished in the reign of Khri gTsug lde btsan (815-841).[27] In fact, the colophon of the *Chos kyi rgyal po'i mdo* (*The Dharma King Sūtra*) in the Derge Kangyur (Tib. *bka' 'gyur*) says, "The sūtra was translated from Chinese in the early years and has not been corrected according to the *Mahāvyutpatti*."[28] Thus, if Obata's theory on the influence of the *Lidai fabao ji* is correct, it is very reasonable to suggest that these Chan-related sūtras may have been translated even before the Council of Tibet. In addition to their early existence, evidence shows that these sūtras were probably well received by Tibetan Buddhists at the time, for their records were not only found in the

[25] See *e.g.*, Obata, "Chibetto no zenshū to rekidai hōbōki."
[26] Obata, "Chibetto no zenshū to rekidai hōbōki," 167-170.
[27] See Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, 441. Some scholars have argued that *Mahāvyutpatti* was completed in the year of 814; see, *e.g.*, Kimura, "Tonkō shutsudo no chibetto bun zenshū bunken no seikaku 敦煌出土のチベット文禅宗文献の性格 (The Characteristics of Tibetan Chan Literature Recovered from Dunhuang)," 443-444. For a detailed study on its compilation, see, *e.g.*, Harada, "*Mahāvyutpatti* no seiritu zyōzi '*Mahāvyutpatti*' の成立事情 (On the Compilation of *Mahāvyutpatti*)."
[28] Quoted in Kimura, "Tonkō shutsudo no chibetto bun zenshū bunken no seikaku," 444.

peripheral areas like Dunhuang but also in Central Tibet.[29]

This early popularity of Chan teachings among the Tibetan practitioners of that period could be further supported by the fact that Chan master Moheyan was invited by the royal family to teach Chan in Lhasa around the same time (c. the 2nd half of the 8th century).[30] Judging from the overwhelming number of Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts that bear his name and attribute the teachings to him, it is conspicuously evident that Moheyan played a pivotal role in popularizing Chan among the Tibetan practitioners at the time. However, the popularization of Chan teachings, especially its teaching of sudden awakening, also brought about the so-called Council of Tibet, which has usually been described as a debate or debates between Moheyan, the representative of Chinese subitist or *ston mun* (*i.e.*, "sudden-gate") position, and Kamalaśīla, the representative of Indian gradualist or *tsen men* (*i.e.*, "gradual-gate") position.

Nevertheless, in terms of its content, I argue that the Council of Tibet would be better understood not as an instigator of doctrinal controversy but as part of the doxographic integration process (which will be discussed more below and which) contemporary Tibetan recipients engaged in trying to figure out the teaching and practice of sudden awakening or simultaneous access (Tib. *cig car 'jug pa*). This argument can be validated not only by the Chinese record of the Council, *Zhengli jue*, but also by the many Tibetan contemporary anthologies of catechism on the meaning and practice of *ston mun* or *cig car 'jug pa.*[31] So, we see that, in the *Zhengli jue* (and in its Tibetan

[29] Harada, "Chibetto yakukyō si 吐蕃王国訳経史 (A History of Sūtra Translation in Tibet)," 443.
[30] See *e.g.*, Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 38.
[31] As noted early, *ston mun* is a Tibetan transliteration of the Chinese tenn *dun-men* 頓門 or "sudden-gate," *cig car 'jug pa* is believed to be a Tibetan translation of the Chinese term *dun-men* (sudden gate) or *dun-ru* 頓入 (sudden entrance).

translation),[32] there are questions regarding how sudden awakening is possible and taught by the Buddha in the sūtras. We also see several Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts and early Nyingma texts, including an unknown author's *dMyigs su myed pa gcig tshul gyi sgom don* (PT 116/5),[33] sPug Ye shes dbyangs's *rNal 'byor chen por bsgom pa'i don* (PT 818 and ITJ 705), and Vimalamitra's *Cig car 'jug pa rnam par mi rtog pa'i bsgom don*, in the question-and-answer form detailing the various meanings of *cig car 'jug pa* or "simultaneous access," its practice of non-objectification or non-fixation (Tib. *dmyigs su myed pa*), and its relation to non-conceptuality (Tib. *rnam par mi rtog pa*). Even the King Khri srong lde brtsan is said to have requested Dunhuang monk Tankuang 曇曠 (c. mid-8th century) for exegesis on related issues.[34]

After the Council, perhaps due to the authenticating effect of the inquiries or their learned understanding of the teachings for their practice, early Tibetan Buddhists seem to request for more Chan teachings. This increased request can be seen from the increased volume of written and/or oral teachings of Chan masters being translated into Tibetan. For example, not only do we see that the teachings of renowned Chinese Chan masters,

[32] Over the years, scholars have found multiple copies of the Tibetan translation of the "Old Question" (*jiuwen* 舊問) section of the *Zhengli jue*. These copies are in Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts PT 823, PT 827, and PT 829. For a study of these manuscripts, see, *e.g.*, Imaeda, "Documents tibétains de Touen-houag concernant le concile du Tibet" and Okimoto, "Tonkō shutsudo no chibetto bun zenshū bunken no naiyō 敦煌出土のチベット文禅宗文献の内容 (The Contents of Tibetan Chan Literature Recovered from Dunhuang)," 423; and Kimura, "Tonkō shutsudo no chibetto bun zenshū bunken no seikaku 敦煌出土のチベット文禅宗文献の性格 (The Characteristics of Tibetan Chan Literature Recovered from Dunhuang)," 442-443.

[33] Dunhuang manuscripts exhibit some unique characteristics of early Tibetan spelling. For example, instead of *dmigs su med pa*, they usually have *dmyigs su myed pa*. Thus, I have keep their original spelling when presenting them. For a discussion on the characteristics of the spelling in the Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts, see, *e.g.*, Ueyama, "Chibettoyaku *Tongo shinshū yōketsu* no kenkyū チベット訳『頓悟真宗要決』の研究 (A Study of the Tibetan Version of Tunwu chên tsung yao chūeh)," 45-46.

[34] For the exchange between the King Khri srong lde brtsan and Dunhuang monk Tankuang, see, *e.g.*, Pachow, "A Study of the Twenty-two Dialogues on Mahāyāna Buddhism," and Ueyama, *Tonkō bukkyō no kenkyū* 敦煌佛教の研究 (*A Study of Dunhuang Buddhism*), 32-33. For a translation of the twenty-two questions asked by Khri srong lde brtsan, see Pachow, "The Translation: *The Twenty-two Dialogues on Mahāyāna* by T'an-k'uang."

such as Bodhidharma, Wolun 臥輪 (early 7th century), Heze Shenhui, Jingzhong Wuxiang, Baotang Wuchu, Xiangmozang 降魔藏 (early 8th century), and Moheyan, were translated from Chinese to Tibetan, but we also see a list of forty-some relatively unknown Chan masters, Chinese and non-Chinese, whose sayings or "realizations" (Tib. *rig pa*) were translated into Tibetan as well.[35]

How do we construe the above various Tibetan translations of Chan-related sūtras and teachings? From the disseminator's perspective, these translations could be seen as a result mostly from the influence of Moheyan, for historical evidence only supports his presence in Tibet, whereas all other Chan masters did not set a foot there. Thus, as mentioned earlier, Obata argues that it was Moheyan who made the effort to integrate the teachings and created the syncretic tradition called sTon mun. Nevertheless, the wide spectrum of the teachings and their diverse sources really beg for further explanation.

Therefore, I propose that, instead of the Chinese disseminators, it was really the Tibetan recipients who played the decisive role in the endeavor to translate into Tibetan the Chan-related sūtras, texts and anthologies expounding the teaching and practice of sudden awakening, as well as the oral commentaries of their masters. As my above narrative suggested, in the endeavor, the Tibetan recipients of the time went through a process of receiving the teachings, understanding/questioning/authenticating these

[35] We can these Chan masters and their teachings in Dunhuang Tibetan Manuscript PT 116 and in the sTon mun chapter of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's *bSam gtan mig sgron* where he quotes the "realizations" (Tib. *rig pa*) of thirty four different *shen she*, a Tibetan transliteration of Chinese title *chanshi* 禪師 or dhyāna master, to elucidate the doctrines of sTon mun. For studies of these Chan masters and their teachings, see, *e.g.*, Obata, "Pelliot 116 bunken ni mieru shozenji no kenkyū Pelliot. Tib. n. 116 文献にみえる諸禅師の研究 (A Study of the Chan Masters Appearing in Pelliot 116)"; Okimoto, "bSam yas no shūron (2): Tonkō seizō bunken ni okeru sho zenshi bSam yas の宗論(二): 敦煌西蔵文献に於ける諸禅師 (The Religious Debate of bSam yas (2): The Various Chan Masters in the Tibetan Documents from Dunhuang)" and "Chibetto yaku *ninyu shigyo ron* nit suite チベット訳「二入四行論」について (On the Tibetan Translation of the *Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Practices*)."

teachings, and then translating and requesting more Chan teachings. This process effectively tells us that these Tibetan recipients were seriously engaged in learning and practicing the subitist Chan teachings, and in the process of learning and practicing them, it seems that they were not so particularly sectarian-bound, for their sources came from various Chan Sects. Yet, these Tibetan recipients seem to know what they were looking for, as their translated Chan teachings were mostly aiming at the soteriological goal of sudden awakening. This subitist nature of these teachings, I believe, ultimately gave rise to gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's characterization of the tradition as sTon mun or the "Sudden School."

Not only were Tibetan recipients seriously involved in the translations of Chan-related sūtras and teachings, but, I would further argue, due to the wide spectrum of the translated teachings and their diverse sources, these Tibetan recipients probably belonged to different groups and were practicing, translating, and assimilating the various sTon mun teachings in their own ways. Thus, we see in the *Zhengli jue*, Moheyan reports that when he was first invited, under the order of the King Khri srong lde brtsan, to teach Chan in Lhasa, how he was repeatedly questioned regarding the principles and sources of Chan teachings. Nevertheless, after the King acknowledged the teachings, Moheyan also reports, the King then dispatched Damomodi (or Dharmamadi) 達摩摩低 (c. late-8th century), along with Moheyan himself, to disseminate the teachings of Chan to the Tibetans.[36]

In addition, we also see that Lang 'gro dKon cog 'byung nas (c. late-8th century),

[36] This account is given in Moheyan's second report to the King Khri srong lde brtsan collected in the *Zhengli jue*. It says, "Your Majesty then understood that the principles of Chan I spoke of were right. As a result, [Your Majesty] dispatched Damomodi (or Dharmamadi) to disseminate the teachings of Chan [with me] together (陛下了知臣之所說禪門宗旨是正，方遣與達摩摩低同開禪教)" (Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 38).

who is revered as one of the twenty-five disciples of Padmasambhava by the later Nyingma School,[37] is also identified as an adept of the sTon mun tradition by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in the *bSam gtan mig sgron.* Therein, gNubs chen not only cites Lang 'gro's teaching to support the practice of sTon mun but also indicates that Lang 'gro wrote a *bsGom lung* (*A Treatise on Meditation*) pertaining to the sTon mun teachings.[38] Moreover, Dunhuang manuscript PT 699, a Tibetan commentary on a Chan treatise called the *Lung chung* (*Small Treatise*; ITL 689/1), lists Lang 'gro as one of the six accomplished practitioners (Tib. *grub pa po*) who realized the highest achievement of "nirvāṇa without remainder of the aggregates" (Tib. *phung po lhag ma ma lus par yongs su mya ngag bzla ba'i don*) advocated by the Chan treatise.[39]

Among early Tibetan contemplatives, Lang 'gro was not the only who practiced both sTon mun and Mahāyoga (perhaps, proto-Dzogchen too). Lo-tsā-wa sKa ba dPal brtsegs (c. late-8th and early-9th centuries), a virtuous teacher of tantric teachings (Tib. *sngags kyi dge bshes*),[40] not only translated many important tantric scriptures including the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi-tantra*[41] and possibly the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*[42] as well.

[37] See, *e.g.*, Dudjom Rinpoche, *The rNying ma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, 535.
[38] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 150.6 and 169.1.
[39] Specifically, Dunhuang manuscript PT 699 lists (1) gNubs Nam mkha'i snying po, (2) rLang su Ga ta go ba, (3) Lang 'gro dKon cog 'byung nas, (4) dBu na a nang, (5) 'Brom Za sril la, and (6) Mar kong Za rin cen as the accomplished practitioners (Tib. *grub pa po*) of the fruition, nirvāṇa without remainder of the aggregates (Tib. *phung po lhag ma ma lus par yongs su mya ngag bzla ba'i don*). In the list, only gNubs Nam mkha'i snying po and Lang 'gro dKon cog 'byung nas are easily identifiable, and both of them are recognized as members of the twenty-five disciples of Padmasambhava (Dudjom Rinpoche, *The rNying ma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, 535). While gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes clearly identifies Lang 'gro dKon cog 'byung nas as an adept of the sTon mun tradition, he gives two figures of Nam mkha'i snying po, one with the family name of Tshig tsa as a sTon mun adept and the other with the family name of Jo bo (identified as the same as gNubs) as a Mahāyoga adept. Whether these two figures are the same person is still debatable; see also footnote 50 below.
[40] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 200.6
[41] For a study of this tantra, see Hodge, *The Mahā-Vairocana-Abhisaṃbodhi-Tantra with Buddhaguhya's commentary.*
[42] See Martin, *Unearthing Bon Treasures*, 112.

He also composed exegetic treatises from the perspective of sTon mun as well.[43] Le'u gZhon nu snying po, according to gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's *bSam gtan mig sgron*, also composed a *bsGom lung*, a treatise on meditation, from the perspective of sTon mun.[44] In addition to this sTon mun association, he is also reported to be the eighth abbot of the bSam yas monastery built by the King Khri srong lde brtsan and consecrated by Padmasambhava.[45] As the leading teacher of one of the major centers of early Tibetan Buddhism, Le'u gZhon nu snying po, according to Samten Karmay's research, belonged to a lineage that is highly possible to have "a direct connection with some masters of the rDzog chen tradition."[46]

Finally, according to the Dunhuang manuscript PT 996,[47] there existed a sTon mun lineage transmitted from a Central Asian dhyāna master named A rdan hver and passed down through masters including Hvashang Beusin, Hvashang Man, Tshig tsa Nam mkha'i snying po, and sPug Ye shes dbyangs. While Master A rdan hver is said to be from Anse, *i.e.*, Persia, Beusin and Man both have the Chinese title of Hvashang or Venerable Monk, probably suggesting their Chinese origin. From them, this "international" lineage was received by Tibetans, namely, Tshig tsa Nam mkha'i snying po and sPug Ye shes dbyangs.[48] Some scholars have suggested that Hvashang Man may

[43] In his *bSam gtan mig sgron*, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes quotes sKa ba dPal brtsegs twice in the chapter on sTon mun's teachings (132.2 and 151.6). In the first quotation, dPal brtsegs explains *six pāramitās* in a fashion of symbolic exegesis similar to Moheyan's explanation of *ten pāramitās* in PT 116, 171.1-173.2, and the second quotation indicates that dPal brtsegs also composed a treatise on meditation (Tib. *bsgom lung*) from the perspective of sTon mun.

[44] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 150.4.

[45] Dunhuang manuscript ITJ 689/2 lists gLe'u gZhon nu snying po as the eighth abbot of the bSam yas monastery; for a translation of ITJ 689/2, see Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 78-79. According to Karmay, the two family names, gLe'u and Le'u are the same (78).

[46] Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 76. For a more detailed discussion and a translation of these lists, see Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 76-80.

[47] For a study of Dunhuang manuscript PT 996, see Lalou, "Document tibétain sur l'expansion du dhyana chinois" and the references mentioned in the footnote 16 of Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 88.

[48] For more detailed biographies of these lineage holders, see PT 996; also Lalou, "Document tibétain sur

be the same person as Hvashang Moheyan, for Hvashang Man is said to disseminate the teachings in the Tsong kha area and, according to the *Zhengli jue*, Moheyan indeed went to Tsong kha after his stay in Lhasa.[49] If this theory is correct, since Moheyan clearly describes his association with the Northern Chan lineage in the *Zhengli jue*, it is then very plausible to suggest that the "syncretic synthesis" of the above sTom mun lineage was produced by the Tibetan recipients.

While the identity of Tshig tsa Nam mkha'i snying po is still in dispute,[50] sPug Ye shes dbyangs (c. early 9th century) has been identified as the author of the *rNal 'byor chen por bsgom pa'i don*, a text consisting of a series of questions and answers concerning the teachings and practices of sTon mun briefly mentioned earlier.[51] In addition, according to two recently found inscriptions, sPug Ye shes dbyangs commissioned two series of images of Buddha Vairocana surrounded by eight Bodhisattvas carved on the remote cliff walls of Amdo and Chamdo.[52] As these images highly suggest that sPug Ye shes dbyangs was also a Mahāyoga practitioner, it thus effectively puts him in the same camp

l'expansion du dhyana chinois."

49 See Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 38.

50 The identity of Tshig tsa Nam mkha'i snying po is still in dispute, as one of the twenty-five disciples of Padmasambhava is called gNubs Nam mkha'i snying po who has been quoted by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes under the family name of Jo bo (but an interlaced note identifies it as gNubs) as an adept of Mahāyoga in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (278.2). Meanwhile, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes clearly identifies Tshig tsa Nam mkha'i snying po as the author of a *Cig car 'jug pa'i mdo* in the sTon mun chapter of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (180.3). Based on this description, Karmay has argued that these two Nam mkha'i snying pos are not identical "for the simple fact that both have distinctively different family names: Tshig tsa and gNubs" (Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 98). Yet, Dunhuang manuscript PT 699, a commentary on a Chan treatise (ITJ 689/1), includes gNubs Nam mkha'i snying po, along with Lang 'gro dKon cog 'byung nas mentioned earlier, as one of the practitioners who have realized the highest attainment advocated by the Chan treatise, *i.e.*, nirvāṇa without remainder of the aggregates. Reading PT 699 as a Mahāyoga commentary on the Chan treatise, *Lung chung* (ITL 689/1), van Schaik and Dalton think that PT 699 strengthens the likelihood to identify the two figures as the same person, and they further conjecture that Nam mkha'i snying po may have played an important part in both Mahāyoga and Chan lineages (van Schaik and Dalton, "Where Chan and Tantra Meet," 71 (footnote 39)).

51 See PT 996 and the study in Otokawa, "New Fragments of the *rNal 'byor chen por bsgom pa'i don* from Tabo."

52 For details of these two images and associated inscriptions, see Heller, "Early Ninth Century Images of Vairochana from Eastern Tibet."

elaborations and commentaries, for instance, in the forms of sūtra, saying, or treatise; (b) questions and answers on various issues, either to expound or to clarify doctrinal or practical issues from the sTon mun perspective; (c) instructions on how to achieve the sTon mun objective of *cig car 'jug pa* or "instantaneous/simultaneous access" to the ultimate awakening; and (d) problems one may encounter and solutions one may apply during the practice. To demonstrate this compilation scheme Tibetan contemplative recipients may employ to organize and assimilate the Chan teachings, I will analyze the content structure of two important Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts, namely, ITJ 709 and PT 116, on which various studies have shown their close connection with the teachings of sTon mun.[53] Since my argument would be sufficiently demonstrated with a structural or survey-like analysis of their contents and issues, I will not go into the details of the individual texts that comprise the two collections.

1. Example One: Dunhuang Tibetan Manuscript ITJ 709

Physically, ITJ 709 is a manuscript of 38 Tibetan folios with 9 different texts successively written on either side of the pages.[54] Content-wise, it is a collection of different doctrines and practices including: (1) teachings from different masters (Texts 1, 5, and 8), (2) treatises on various themes including *śamatha* and *vipaśyana* (Text 6), (3) the nonduality between skillful means (*upāya*) and *prajñā* wisdom (Text 7), (4) the meaning of entering Mahāyoga (Text 9), (5) questions and answers on different aspects

[53] For related studies, see Ueyama, "The Study of Tibetan Chan Manuscripts Recovered from Tun-huang." See also Faber, "A Tibetan Dunhuang Treatise on Simultaneous Enlightenment" and the references therein.
[54] For a detailed description of ITJ 709, see Dalton and van Schaik, *Tibetan Tantric Manuscripts from Dunhuang: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Stein Collection at the British Library*, 302-306. See also Kimura, "Tonkō shutsudo chibetto-bun shahon Stein 709 敦煌出土チベット文写本 Stein 709 (The Dunhuang Tibetan Manuscript Stein 709)."

as the aforementioned Lang 'gro dKon cog 'byung nas, sKa ba dPal brtsegs, and Le'u gZhon nu snying po, who freely crossed sectarian boundaries, especially, that between Chan, Mahāyoga, and/or proto-Dzogchen.

Arguably, as these early Tibetan sTon mun practitioners of different backgrounds rather freely crossed sectarian boundaries, due to their syncretic practices, it is highly possible that they also participated in shaping sTon mun as a diversified and syncretic tradition. For that, their many different translations of Chan-related teachings could be a demonstrative sign. And, in this process of translation, these early Tibetan recipients, probably due to their practical demands, tried their best to understand, *i.e.*, carefully question and authenticate, the teachings so that they could further assimilate the teachings for their own use. Below let me further elaborate part of this assimilation process with their systematic compilations of Chan teachings.

B. The Systematic Compilations of Chan Teachings

After questioning and authenticating the teachings, how would a recipient try to further understand and assimilate them in a more systematic manner? From the discussed contemplative recipient's perspective, I would propose that, owing to their pragmatic concerns of putting the teachings into practice, these contemplative recipients would try to organize the teachings into more structural formats so that they could practice them more systematically. Then, how would they specifically do so?

A possible way is to compile teachings into reference manuals so that the practitioners can refer to them when needed. As means, these manual-like texts would be compiled to respond to different needs, and from a contemplative practitioner's perspective, they should probably contain the following elements: (a) doctrinal

of sTon mun teachings (Texts 3 and 4), and (6) problems arising in meditation (Text 2).[55] Unlike the collection in PT 116 which appears to be complete, the collection in ITJ 709 has missing pages from various texts. As a result, it makes an accurate evaluation of the collection more challenging. Even though it might not be as widely circulated as PT 116, ITJ 709 is still significant, especially in terms of its *bridging role* in the early Tibetan Buddhists' assimilation of the teachings after the Council of Tibet. Regarding the dates of its compilation, textual analysis has suggested that it was probably compiled after the Council of Tibet but before the year of 848 when the Yarlung Tibetan government lost its control over Dunhuang.[56] Yet its material can be traced back to the second half of the eighth century, as one of the texts in the collection, *bSam gtan gi yi ge* or *The Book of Dhyāna*, is said to have been written under the order of the King Khri srong lde brtsan.[57]

To understand its aforementioned bridging role, the following observations on the contents of ITJ 709 are necessarily in order. First, just as its employment of the metaphor that the doctor may use different practices according to the patients' different illnesses, ITJ 709, as a whole, suggests that the teachings of Indian Madhyamaka or Tsen men, as they emphasize gradual cultivation, are for novice practitioners, whereas the teachings of Chinese Chan or sTon mun, since they teach sudden awakening, are meant for more

[55] Specifically, the nine texts are: (1) Moheyan's sudden teachings called *bSam gtan cig car 'jug pa'i sgo*; (2) a Chan treatise on the problems arising in meditation, *bSam gtan gi skyon rnams bstan pa'*; (3) a collection of questions and answers on various issues from the sTon mun perspective, *Tshangs la phan sems kyis 'jam dpal la zhus pa*; (4) a Chan treatise on some extreme aspects of Chan teachings; (5) Slob dpon Byang cub klu dbang's teachings on "viewing the mind" (Tib. *sems la blta*); (6) a discussion of *śamatha* and *vipaśyana* from the sTon mun perspective; (7) a discussion of the nonduality of means (Tib. *thabs*) and wisdon (Tib. *shes rab*) from the sTon mun perspective; (8) mKhan po 'Gal na yas's teachings, which states that the simultaneous approach to Madhyamaka is the best of all the Mahāyāna forms of contemplation and that there are no methods in the simultaneous approach (Tib. *cig car 'jug pa*); (9) *bSam gtan gi yi ge* composed under the order of the King Khri srong lde brtsan.

[56] See *e.g.*, Kimura, "Tonkō shutsudo no chibetto bun zenshū bunken no seikaku," 460-461.

[57] The first line of *bSam gtan gi yi ge* reads "*bSam gtan gi yi ge* comes to being under the order or "neck seal" (Tib. *mgur gi phyag rgya*) of King Khri srong lde brtsan" (bsam gtan gi yi ge/ lha btsan po khri srong lde brtsan gi mgur gi phyag rgya 'og nas 'byung ba'); ITJ 709, 36r.1 (since Dunhuang manuscripts usually are written on both sides, 36r.1 refers to Line 1 on the *recto* or front side of page 36).

advanced practitioners. Even though the compiler(s) or author(s) of ITJ 709 evidently privilege the teachings of sTon mun, their intention of trying to bridge the two doctrinal systems in a hierarchical way is conspicuous as well.

Particularly, in the collection, Text 1 contains Chan master Moheyan's sudden teaching. Like other texts attributed to Moheyan, it teaches the approaches of no-mind (Tib. *myi sems*) and non-attention (Tib. *yid la myi bya ba*) as the simultaneous access to the *dhyāna* of the Tathāgata (Tib. *de bzhin gshegs pa'i bsam gtan cig car 'jug pa*).[58] Similar sTon mun teachings can also be found, at least, in Texts 5, 8 and 9, if not the entire collection. Meanwhile, with respect to the teachings of Tsen men, Text 4 quotes teachings from Kamalaśīla's *Bhāvanākrama* explaining the six problems concerning the attainment of different *samādhis* and their eight antidotes. Text 6 even promotes the idea of the wisdoms of hearing, thinking and meditating (Tib. *thos bsam sgom gsum*) and details the developmental aspects of *śamatha* and *vipaśyana*. These teachings noticeably echo the gradualist model for realization that Kamalaśīla forcefully puts forth in his *Bhāvanākrama* trilogy. Accordingly, having embraced both sTon mun and Tsen men teachings, the compiler(s) or author(s) of ITJ 709 clearly demonstrate the intention of trying to bridge these two systems. Thus, similar to Japanese scholar Kimura Ryūtoku's conclusion, I would also argue that the contents in the texts compiled in ITJ 709, as a whole, represent the effort of early Tibetan Buddhist recipients trying to integrate the different Buddhist tenets together most probably during or after the Council of Tibet.[59]

Secondly, not only as a bridge between sTon mun and Tsen men, but also as a

[58] See Kimura, "Tonkō shutsudo chibetto-bun shahon Stein 709," 11.

[59] In his "Tonkō shutsudo chibetto-bun shahon Stein 709," Kimura Ryūtoku concludes that, as a whole, ITJ 709 was written from the ultimate position of the sudden school in the attempt to combine the doctrines of the sudden and gradual schools after the Council of Tibet (12-13). He observes that this coalescence of the two positions is also characteristics of the *Blon po bka'i thang yig* and the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (12).

bridge between translation and interpretation, the texts compiled in ITJ 709 collectively illustrate the intention of early Tibetan Buddhists trying to make the various teachings their own through their innovative compilation scheme. This unique innovation occurs not only in terms of coalescing together the two positions of sTon mun and Tsen men, or Chinese Chan and Indian Madhyamaka,[60] but also through the effort of putting different genres of teachings together.

For example, in Text 2 of the collection, concerning the problems arising in meditation, it cites materials from the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra*, the *Bhāvanākrama*, as well as Chan master Shenhui's criticism of the Northern Chan meditation practice. In Text 9, it even regards the *dhyāna* of the Tathāgata, an idea from the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, as the highest practice for Mahāyoga tantric practitioners. Even though the text itself does not specify any Mahāyoga tantric practices, its tantric connection is difficult to deny if one takes into consideration other tantric terms in the same document, such as *man ngag* (or quintessential instructions) and *dam tshig* (or sacred pledges), not to mention the fact that some Tibetan contemplatives of that period were crossing the boundaries between sTon mun and Mahāyoga, as previously discussed. This practice of mingling together different genres of Buddhist teachings, Chan and Madhyamaka, sūtra and tantra, suggests that early Tibetan Buddhist recipients were not confined by sectarian or genre boundaries, but freely maneuvered through different teachings, perhaps, as long as they found such integration to be meaningful, both doctrinally and practically.

As a "hybrid" practice manual, ITJ 709 clearly demonstrates the effort of early

[60] In Text 8 of ITJ 709, there is the idea saying, "There are many doors to the *dhyāna* of the Mahāyāna. Among them, the ultimate one is the simultaneous access to the Madhyamaka. With respect to the simultaneous access, there are no skillful methods" (theg pa chen po'i bsam gtan gi sgo yang mang ste/ de'i nang na dam pa ni don dbu ma la cig car 'jug pa yin te/ cig car 'jug pa la ni thabs myed de); ITJ 709, 35v.1-2 (v stands for verso; thus 35v1-2 refers to Lines 1-2 on the verso or back side of page 35).

Tibetan Buddhist recipients trying to assimilate the new teachings of the Buddha. Not only did they put teachings from different systems together, but they also interlaced foreign translations (from both Chinese and Sanskrit) with original compositions. In this practice of syncretically integrating various teachings, the compilation of ITJ 709 is probably a result of the early stage, as it still contains contrary propositions from different texts in the compilation.[61] In addition, its bridging of the two positions of sTon mun and Tsen men cannot be said to be systematic, especially in comparison to that demonstrated in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes. Be that as it may, ITJ 709 still opens a window for us to see, albeit partially, the innovative undertaking, in which Tibetan sTon mun contemplatives of the 8^{th}-10^{th} centuries tried to understand and organize the teachings of their milieu so that they could practice them more structurally. As a result of this pragmatic strategy, they syncretically practiced sTon mun side by side with other Buddhist teachings, tantric and non-tantric.

2. Example Two: Dunhuang Tibetan Manuscript PT 116

Regarding early Tibetan Buddhists' pragmatic integration of the various teachings of their time, ITJ 709 is not a singular case. Another Dunhuang Tibetan manuscript, PT 116, exhibits similar characteristics but with different emphases. As one of the most important documents among the Dunhuang manuscripts for the study of Tibetan Chan, PT 116 has been well researched in the past few decades. These previous studies provide the context for my reading of PT 116, in which, like that of ITJ 709, I underscore the significance of this compilation in terms of its role in early Tibetan Buddhist recipients' assimilation of

[61] For example, while Text 1 of ITJ 709 advocates various methods for the practice of "simultaneous access," Text 8 definitely states that there are no methods in the "simultaneous access."

the sTon mun teachings.

Physically, PT 116 is a manuscript of 124 Tibetan folios with 9 different texts continuously written on either side of the pages.[62] Content-wise, it is a manual-like collection covering various aspects of sTon mun doctrine and practice. Specifically, it includes: (1) two Chan-related Mahāyāna sūtras (Texts 1 and 2), (2) a treatise on the practice of non-fixation (Tib. *dmyigs su myed pa*) that includes questions and answers defending and expounding sTon mun positions (Text 5), (3) a Tibetan translation of the Northern Chan treatise *Dunwu zhenzong yaojue* 頓悟真宗要決 (*An Essential Determination on the True Teaching of Sudden Awakening*; hereafter *Yaojue*) that explains the meaning and practice of "viewing the unlocalized" (Ch. *kan wusuochu* 看無所處; Tib. *myed pa'i gnas la blta*) (Text 8), (4) the sayings of various Chan masters (Texts 6 and 7), (5) instructions on issues including the distinctions between Mahāyāna and Hināyāna from the sTon mun perspective (Text 3), (6) the right view (Text 4), and (7) the meaning of Dharmadhātu (Text 9).[63] It is found that, at least, there are ten other Dunhuang manuscripts that correspond in part to the contents and issues discussed in the compilation of PT 116.[64] This fact, in effect, indicates that the contents and issues of PT

[62] For a detailed description of PT 116, see Wang, *Facang dunhuang zangwen wenxian jieti mulu*, 22-23. See also Okimoto, "bSam yas no shūron (1): Pelliot 116 ni tsuite bSam yas の宗論(一): Pelliot 116 について (The Religious Debate of bSam yas (1): On Pelliot 116)" and Ueyama, "Tonkō shutsudo chibettobun zen shiryō no kenyū: P. tib. 116 to sono mondai ten 敦煌出土チベット文禅資料の研究－P.tib.116とその問題點 (A Study of Tibetan Chan Materials Recovered from Tun-huang: The Issue of P. tib. 116)."

[63] Specifically, the nine texts are: (1) a Tibetan translation of the *Bhadracarīpraṇidhāna*; (2) a Tibetan translation of the *Vajracchedikā-sūtra*; (3) instructions on the distinctions between Mahāyāna and Hināyāna, *Theg pa che chung gyi khyad bar*; (4) a summary of various views, *lTa ba mdor bsdus pa las 'byung ba'i don*; (5) a sTon mun treatise on the method of non-fixation, *dMyigs su myed pa tshul gcig pa'i gzhung*; (6) Moheyan's sudden teachings, *mKhan po ma ha yan gyis bsam brtan myi rtog pa'i nang dup ha tol phyind pa drug dang/ bcu 'dus pa bshad pa'i mdo*; (7) sayings of various Chan masters, *bSam brtan gyi mdo sna tshogs*; (8) a Tibetan translation of *Dunwu zhenzong yaojue* 頓悟真宗要決, *Cig char yang dag pa'i phyi mo'i tshor ba// rdo rje shes rab spyad pas pha rol du phyin pa'i chos kyi sgo mo gces pa*; and (9) instructions on the Dharmadhātu, *Chos kyi dbyings nyid bstan pa'i mdo*.

[64] There are: Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts PT 21, PT 118, PT 813, PT 817, PT 821, PT 822, PT 823, ITJ

116 were widely known among the Tibetan Buddhist communities at the time. In addition, it has also been demonstrated that the different texts that comprise the collection were translated or composed at different times, and they were later compiled together in the form of the present document.[65]

From the above brief description of the contents of PT 116, we can see that the different elements of the collection were not randomly put together. That is to say, its compiler(s) had a systematic structure in mind. To demonstrate this systematic compilation scheme, let me offer a survey-like analysis of the contents and issues covered in PT 116 without going into the details of each individual text. Structurally, even though the compilation of PT 116 does not follow exactly the presentation of view, cultivation, conduct, and fruition (Tib. *lta ba*, *bsgom pa*, *spyod pa*, and *'bras bu*) which later Tibetan writers have frequently employed, the document does contain all the four elements. Accordingly, the two Chan-realted Mahāyāna sūtras, *i.e.*, the *Bhadracarīpraṇidhāna* and the *Vajracchedikā-sūtra*, not only identify the right view sTon mun followers adopt, but also legitimize their teachings with the authority of the scriptures (Texts 1 and 2). These scriptural sources are then subsequently followed by further elaboration and clarification of how sTon mun teachings are different from others, presenting them in the forms of doctrines, questions and answers, and the sayings of their teachers (Texts 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9). Afterwards, the practice and fruition from the sTon mun perspective are expounded with exegetical treatises and masters' commentaries (Texts 5, 6, 7 and 8), while the problems one may encounter during the practice and their antidotes are also explained in

703, ITJ 706, and ITJ 708.

[65] For example, according to Kimura Ryūtoku, PT 116/5 was probably composed between 824 and 841, whereas PT 116/8 was probably translated before 814 (Kimura, "Tonkō shutsudo no chibetto bun zenshū bunken no seikaku," 460-461).

the compilation (Text 5).

The systematic compilation scheme of PT 116 can be further understood through noting the close correlation between its view and practice presented in the *Vajracchedikā-sūtra* (Text 2) and the *Yaojue* (Text 8), respectively.[66] That is to say, the *Yaojue*, which details the Chan practice of "viewing the unlocalized," mainly derives its practice from the doctrinal view expounded in the *Vajracchedikā-sūtra*. Put more specifically, the Chan master Zhida 智達, the protagonist of the *Yaojue*, glosses the famous *Vajracchedikā-sūtra* statement of "Without dwelling on anything, in such a way, [a Bodhisattva] gives rise to the mind"[67] in an idiosyncratic Chan approach of "symbolic exegesis" to obtain his practice of "viewing the unlocalized";[68] he explains,

> If the entire mind is absent of [thoughts], it is called the unlocalized. If the mind is further not arisen, it is called abiding. As for "give rise to the mind" [in it], "should or ought to" refers to "certainty"; "give rise to" refers to "view." Thus, "ought to view the unlocalized" is to give rise to the mind.[69]

[66] In fact, its complete title is *Dunwu zhenzong jin'gang bore xiuxing dabian famen yaojue* 頓悟真宗金剛般若修行達彼岸法門要决 (*Cig char yang dag pa'i phyi mo 'i tshor ba// rdo rje shes rab spyad pas pha rol du phyin pa'i chos kyi sgo mo gces pa*; *An essential dharma gate on the sudden awakening to the true teaching that brings one to the other shore by cultivating the vajra wisdom*). For a detailed study of the treatise, see Ueyama, "Chibettoyaku *Tongo shinshū yōketsu* no kenkyū チベット訳『頓悟真宗要決』の研究 (A Study of the Tibetan Version of Tunwu chên tsung yao chūeh)."

[67] That is 『應無所住而生其心。』

[68] The Tibetan translation of the *Yaoyue* translates this *Vajracchedikā-sūtra* statement as follows: "[One] should develop the mind that dwells in the place of no mental investigation" (brtag du myed pa'i gnas la 'dug pa'i sems bskyed pa'i rigs* so); PT 116, 70.3. *the original has "myi rigs so," which clearly is a mistake.

[69] Ueyama, "Chibettoyaku *Tongo shinshū yōketsu* no kenkyū," 96; 『一切心無，是名無所。更不起心，名之為住。而生其心者; 應者當也，生者看也。當無所處看，即是而生其心也。』 Generally speaking, its Tibetan translation follows the Chinese original closely. To contrast, the Tibetan translation is given below.

> If the entire mind is absent of mental investigation, it is called a place of no mental investigation. If the mind is further not disturbed from that, it is called abiding. As for "develop the mind" in it, "should or necessary" refers to "realize"; "develop" refers to "view." Thus, "to view the place of no mental investigation," that is to develop the mind.
> PT 116, 71.3-72.1; sems so chog brtag du myed na/ de'i mying brtag du myed pa'i gnas yin no/ de las yang sems ma gyos na/ de'i mying 'dug ces bya'o/ de'i sems

Thereafter, Zhida further explains that, as one views the unlocalized, one sees the true nature and thus achieves the Buddhahood.[70]

Given the above observations, accordingly, the systematic compilation of the Chan teachings presented in PT 116 really can be seen as indicating a successful incorporation of Chan or sTon mun teachings by the contemporary Tibetan Buddhist recipients. In addition to the compilation's "quasi-systematic" presentation, the success of this assimilation endeavor is further supported by the fact that PT 116 contains both translations of Chinese materials and original Tibetan compositions, for this integration of translations and compositions indeed indicates that early Tibetan Buddhists were not only receiving the teachings but also interpreting them.

With respect to the aspect of receiving the teachings, similar to what has been shown in the case of ITJ 709, early Tibetan Buddhist recipients clearly had not developed any particular sectarian consciousness, but embraced all Chan-related teachings under the rubric of sTon mun. Consequently, Okimoto Katsumi also puts forth a similar conclusion stating that, as a whole, PT 116 characteristically represents the view of sudden awakening from the perspective of Chinese Buddhism.[71]

With respect to the aspect of interpreting the teachings, judging from the existence of Mahāyoga texts in the collection, Ueyama Daishun argues that, after the Council of Tibet, Chan was assimilated (by the Tibetan recipients) as a means to explain the Mahāyoga position in the Dzogchen teachings. In the process, the representation of Chan also changed as it "was entirely wrapped under the umbrella of the doctrine of

bskyed pa na rigs pa shes bya ba ni rig pa'o/ bskyed ces bya ba ni lta ba'o/ brtag du myed pa'i gnas la blta ste/ de'i sems bskyed pa'i rigs so.

70 Ueyama, "Chibettoyaku *Tongo shinshū yōketsu* no kenkyū," 97; 『見性成佛道。』 Its Tibetan translation goes as follows: *ngo bo nyid mthong ste/ sangs rgyas kyi chos lam sgrub bo* (PT 116, 72.4-73.1).

71 See Okimoto, "bSam yas no shūron I: Pelliot 116 ni tsuite."

Dzogchen."[72] As a result, Ueyama sees PT 116 as "a collection of Chan literature enveloped under the standpoint of Dzogchen teachings."[73] In this way, the systematic compilation shown in PT 116 can be seen not only as an indicator to a successful incorporation of sTon mun teachings in Tibet, but also as a bridging step that shows how sTon mun did not disappear but changed its representation via the syncretic integration of Tibetan Buddhist recipients at the time. Below I would further argue that the success of this syncretic integration was most probably due to the contemplative compatibility between the teachings of sTon mun and those of Dzogchen.

From the above discussion, it should be clear that ITJ 709 and PT 116 demonstrate two different strategies early Tibetan Buddhists had employed in understanding, organizing, and thus assimilating the teachings of sTon mun. On the one hand, they tried to reconcile the two positions of the Simultaneist sTon mun and the Gradualist Tsen men in a hierarchical structure, and, on the other hand, they also tried to integrate the teachings of sTon mun under the umbrella of tantric teachings, particularly that of Mahāyoga and/or proto-Dzogchen. Even though these two strategies may not be so well developed yet in the two Dunhuang manuscripts, they have been carried further by later practitioners and authors, and eventually developed into independent presentations.

C. *The Two Strategies of Interpretation*

The two independent presentations early Tibetan Buddhists developed are what I

[72] Ueyama, "Chibettoyaku *Tongo shinshū yōketsu* no kenkyū," 71.
[73] Ibid. See also Ueyama, "Tonkō shutsudo chibettobun zen shiryō no kenyū: P. tib. 116 to sono mondai ten." On the connection between Chan and Dzogchen, some scholars even argue that it was due to the hermeneutic strategy of interpreting the Mahāyoga teachings of Tantric Buddhism from the standpoint of Chinese Chan that Dzogchen came into being. See *e.g.*, Hiramatsu, *Tukan* Issai shūgi *Ninma-ha no shō* トゥカン一切宗義ニンマ派の章 (*The Chapter on the Nyingma school of Thu'u bkwan's* Doctrinal Classification).

call the presentation of hierarchical doxography and the presentation of syncretic integration. While a hierarchical doxography is to arrange various teachings into a series of hierarchically ordered classes, a syncretic integration is to assimilate elements of different sources into an integral whole. Either case, I would argue, requires the recipients to fully understand the teachings so that they can either re-arrange or integrate them in their own terms. Through the hermeneutics or interpretation of "in their own terms," the recipients then really make something foreign into something of their own. With respect to the teachings of sTon mun, early Tibetan recipients, after the initial stages of diversified translation and systematic compilation, also came to the stage of strategic interpretation. Hermeneutically and historically, these three stages are not always so clearly defined. Rather, these stages intertwine with each other so as to reinforce the recipients' understanding as well as their assimilation of the teachings. Now, let me direct our attention to some early Tibetan writings and Dunhuang manuscripts to demonstrate the two presentations early Tibetan Buddhists had participated in, as they re-arranged and/or integrated the teachings of sTon mun.

1. The Presentation of Hierarchical Doxography

As far as we can tell, since early on Tibetan Buddhists were exposed to, and used, doxography in understanding the various Buddhist tenets and practices coming to them. In an article on how Tibetans organized tantras during the 8^{th}-12^{th} centuries, Jacob Dalton begins by emphasizing the difficulties the Tibetans experienced as they encountered the influx of rapidly changing and diverse Buddhist teachings. While these diverse teachings brought them confusions, these teachings also inspired their immediate and specific responses. Dalton thus writes, "Toward this end, one of the primary strategies they

resorted to was doxography arranging the tantras into a series of hierarchically ordered classes."[74] And, it is evident that early Tibetan Buddhists did not just apply this practice of hierarchically arranging different teachings to the tantras, but they also applied it to other genres of Buddhist tenets and practices.[75]

Historically speaking, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla may be the first teachers who introduced the idea of doxography to the Tibetans with their works expounding the Buddhist teachings from the Indian Madhyamaka perspective.[76] Following their works, Ye shes sde, a scholar-translator in the Tibetan court of the late-8th-early-9th centuries, may be the first Tibetan to compose a doxographic treatise entitled *lTa ba'i khyad par* (*Distinctions of the Views*) distinguishing the different teachings (or branches) within the school of Madhyamaka.[77] Moreover, apart from these non-tantric works, the first doxographic system written from the tantric perspective in Tibet was probably the *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba* (*Garland of the Views: Quintessential Instructions*), attributed to Padmasambhava and evidently written during his brief stay in Tibet in the end of the 8th century.[78] Accordingly, it must be against this vibrant yet syncretic religious milieu and

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[74] Dalton, "A Crisis of Doxography," 115.

[75] Of course, Tibetans were not the only one to do so. Chinese have used the practice of *panjiao* 判教 to organize Buddhist teachings according to their understandings. For a more detailed discussion of *panjiao* in Chinese Buddhism, see, *e.g.*, Mun, *The History of Doctrinal Classification in Chinese Buddhism: A Study of the* Panjiao *Systems* and Gregory, *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism*, Part II (93-170).

[76] These two non-tantric Buddhist doxographic works by Śāntarakṣita amd Kamalaśīla are *Madhyamakālaṃkāra* (*Ornament of the Middle Way*) and *Madhyamakāloka* (*Illumination of the Middle Way*), respectively. For studies of these two works, see *e.g.*, Blumenthal, *The Ornament of the Middle Way: A Study of the Madhyamaka Thought of Śāntarakṣita* and Keira, *Mādhyamika and Epistemology: A Study of Kamalaśīla's Method for Proving the Voidness of All Dharmas.*

[77] For a brief description of Ye shes sde's *lTa ba'i khyad par*, see, *e.g.*, Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, 439-440.

[78] For a brief discussion on the date, authorship, and contents of the *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba*, see, *e.g.*, Dalton, "A Crisis of Doxography," 132-134. For a more detailed discussion and a translation of the text, see, *e.g.*, Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 137-174. While Dalton thinks that all indications point to the reliability of the attribution of the *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba* to Padmasambhava, thus confirming its date of the late-eighth century (Dalton, "A Crisis of Doxography," 132), Karmay considers that the composition of the *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba* "probably belongs to the late ninth or early tenth centuries" (Karmay,

their doxographic responses that we come to see how early Tibetan Buddhists tried to assimilate the teachings of sTon mun into their hierarchical doxography.

Among these early Tibetan doxographic systems, the *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba* puts forth a hierarchical system of seven vehicles (Tib. *theg pa*) that include, in ascending order, three sūtra vehicles (Śrāvaka, Pratyekabuddha, and Bodhisattva), three outer tantra vehicles (Kriyā, Ubhayā, and Yoga), and one inner tantra vehicle or Mahāyoga that consists of the three modes (Tib. *tshul*) of development, perfection, and great perfection (Tib. *bskyed rdzogs rdzogs chen*). Not long after the *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba*, first in the writings of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes and later accepted by the entire Nyingma school, the three modes of the Mahāyoga are further developed into three distinct vehicles, thus resulting in the nine vehicles system (TIb. *theg pa rim pa dgu*) with Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga, another name for Dzogchen, on the top of the system. As Dalton insightfully observes in his article, this doxographic development demonstrated some uniquely Tibetan concerns; particularly, Dalton writes, "Unlike their Indian contemporaries [who focused more on ritual expressions], the Tibetans preferred a more properly 'doxographic' approach, organizing the tantras around differences in doctrine."[79] Arguably, this doxographic approach highlighting the differences among the doctrines would greatly facilitate the Tibetan recipients to intellectually understand and organize their received teachings.

In addition, the doxography highlighting doctrinal differences would also help the Tibetan contemplatives to put the teachings into practice more accurately, for this kind of practical implementation requires differential details which the doxography can properly

The Great Perfection, 149).

[79] Dalton, "A Crisis of Doxography," 120.

provide. These differential details usually appear as different views and, like the different prescriptions a doctor may prescribe to different patients (because of their different illnesses), are thus suitable only to practitioners with appropriate capacities. In this way, the somewhat "rudimentary" doxography of ITJ 709 that advocates Tsen men and sTon mun for beginning and advanced practitioners, respectively, can be seen not only as a response to the Council of Tibet but also as part of the doxographic movement early Tibetan recipients engaged in to make sense of sTon mun, both intellectually and contemplatively, by comparing it against other Buddhist approaches.[80] As a result, the teachings of sTon mun were compared not only to Tsen men but also to Mahāyoga. There, it seems that the conclusion, at least for some, was that sTon mun revealed the essential meaning of Mahāyoga, which, in sTon mun terminology, lies in the teaching and practice of simultaneous access.[81] Hence, the practitioners of Mahāyoga specially familiarized themselves with its tenets and practices.[82]

Yet, what was the basis for such a conclusion? Was it because the practitioners of sTon mun were trying to disguise their teachings under the name of Mahāyoga for special privilege, which would imply the popularity of Mahāyoga at the time? And yet, was Mahāyoga popular in the end of the eighth century when its practices of sexual yoga (Tib.

[80] One may even pursue the possibility that it may be due to the doctrinal controversies surrounding the Council of Tibet that early Tibetan Buddhists were so much into the doxographic classification that, in part, was to clarify misunderstandings arising from similar systems.

[81] Particularly, I am thinking of the Dunhuang Tibetan manuscript, PT 818 (also ITJ 705), which has the title *rNal 'byor chen por bsgom pa'i don* (literally, "the meaning of the practice in Mahāyoga"). Also, in the *dMyigs su myed pa tshul gcig pa'i gzhung* of PT 116 (Text 5), it ends the text saying "The treatise, 'Non-fixation is the only method,' which has been written simply as an aid for the practitioners of Mahāyoga to remember the essential meaning, is completed" (dmyigs su myed pa tshul gcig pa'i gzhung rnal 'byor chen po rnams la dgos pa'i don dran ba'i rten tsam du bris pa rdzogs s.ho); PT 116, 170.2.

[82] In the *bSam gtan gi yi ge* of ITJ 709, it has the following statement, "Therefore, now, while there are no reasons to show other [*dhyāna*s], it shows in brief that the practitioners of Mahāyoga should specially cultivate the teaching of the *dhyāna* of the Tathāgata." (da 'dir ni rnam grangs gzhan gi gtan tshigs myi smos kyi/ de bzhin gshegs pa'i bsam gtan gyi lung rnal 'byor chen po bas las su bsgom ba nyi tshe mdo tsam zhig bstan to); ITJ 709, 36v.3-5.

sbyor ba) and violent liberation rite (Tib. *sgrol ba*) were still controversial and its translations were under the strict control of the royal government?[83] Or, was it because the teachings of sTon mun were somehow used by the Tibetans as a means to explain the Mahāyoga position, as Ueyama Daishun has suggested? Or, is it possible that, due to pragmatic reasons such as their doctrinal affinities and/or contemplative compatibility, Tibetan recipients of both sTon mun and Mahāyoga employed each other in order to reinforce each other's practice? Due to the lack of definitive evidence, all these questions cannot be answered with certainty. Nevertheless, I argue that it is still possible to identify certain doctrinal affinities and common practitioners between sTon mun and Mahāyoga to support the above conclusion.

First, because both traditions emphasized the possibility of sudden awakening,[84] it is then possible to argue that it was their emphasis of this direct and instantaneous path to Buddhahood, a characteristic of the fruitional vehicle, that inspired early Tibetan recipients to find the two traditions compatible and thus associate them contemplatively together, particularly at the time when sectarian consciousness was not apparent. This hypothesis can be further supported by both ITJ 709 and PT 116, as both compilations advocate the sTon mun practices of *cig car 'jug pa* or instantaneous/simultaneous access, such as the method of non-fixation and the *dhyāna* of the Tathāgata, for the practitioners of Mahāyoga. Evidently, these Tibetan contemplatives, who did practice both sTon mun and Mahāyoga, include Lang 'gro dKon cog 'byung nas, Lo-tsā-wa sKa ba dPal brtsegs,

[83] See *e.g.*, Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 4-6 and Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, 443.

[84] In his article, "Mahāyoga Texts at Tun-hunag," K. W. Eastman discusses a Dunhuang manuscript, ITJ 321, a commentary on the *Thabs kyi zhags pa pad mo'i 'phreng ba'i rgyud*, one of the eighteen tantras of the Mahāyoga. In its first chapter, it shows that the ideas of achieving Buddhahood in a single lifetime and attaining the state of omniscience at once are an integral part of Vajrayāna tradition. Judging from its formations, Eastman concludes that these ideas are entirely Indic and special to Vajrayāna, even though they closely resemble aspects of Chan teachings. See, especially, Eastman, "Mahāyoga Texts at Tun-hunag," 49-52 and 57.

Le'u gZhon nu snying po, Tshig tsa Nam mkha'i snying po, and sPug Ye shes dbyangs, about whom we briefly discussed earlier.

Furthermore, the words of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* can also be telling here. In his conclusion to the chapter on Dzogchen, gNubs chen points out the differences among various approaches. On the differences between sTon mun and Dzogchen, he also indicates their similarities:

> The terminology of sTon mun is similar to that of Dzogchen. While, [similar to Dzogchen], it [*i.e.*, sTon mun] teaches [the practices of] non-action and non-establishment, having in mind the ground that is not arising and completely perfect, it [only] speaks of the ultimate truth as the ground that is unborn and empty. If one examines with respect to that [*i.e.*, the teachings of sTon mun], there are still [the problems of making one's awareness of the two] truths alternating, getting accustomed [only] to the state of *śūnyatā*, and making effort. [Thus,] they [*i.e.*, the Simultaneists of sTon mun] never experience in reality the nonduality of [the two] truths. Obscured by their own [mistaken] view, they need yet to enter into nonduality.[85]

Here, even though gNubs chen ends in pointing out the problems in the view of sTon mun from the Dzogchen perspective, he also clearly states that sTon mun and Dzogchen have similar terminology, especially in terms of the practices of non-action (Tib. *bya ba med*) and non-establishment (Tib. *bsgrub pa med pa*). These similar terminology and practices, as gNubs chen states in the reasons why he composes the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, brought confusions to the Tibetans even to the degree of conflating the two systems (see the quotation below).

Thus, with the assertion of instantaneous awakening and the similar practices of

[85] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 490.3-5; ston mun ni rdzogs chen dang skad mthun/ bya ba med bsgrub pa med par ston yang/ gzhi mi 'byung ba yongs su grub pa la dgongs nas/ don dam pa'i bden pa ma skyes stong pa'i gzhi la smra ste/ de la ni brtags na da dung bden pa re mos pa dang/ stong pa'i ngang la 'dris par byed pa dang/ rtsol ba yod de/ bden pa gnyis med pa la spyod kyang ma myong ste/ rang gi lta bas bsgribs te gnyis med la bzod 'jug dgos so. See also Meinert, "Structural Analysis of the *Bsam gtan mig sgron*," 192, and Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 105.

non-action and non-establishment, it would be difficult, at first, for early Tibetan recipients not to come to the conclusion that the practitioners of Mahāyoga, especially in its highest mode of *rdzogs chen* or great perfection, should familiarize themselves with the tenets and practices of sTon mun. Subsequently, these practitioners offered the somewhat bewildering proposition seen in the Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts including ITJ 705, 709, 710, PT 116, and 818. As mentioned earlier, there were practitioners of Mahāyoga doing just that and coalescing the two teachings together. However, this proposition that the practitioners of Mahāyoga should practice the teachings of sTon mun, I would argue, could only occur in the early stage of their interactions, for further interactions would probably lead to either the recognition of their differences, which the *bSam gtan mig sgron* is a clear example, or the further syncretic integration that will be discussed in the next subsection.

gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, the great Tibetan codifier of the dark age, composed the *bSam gtan mig sgron* probably in the years of the late-9th-early-10th centuries. Essentially, the *bSam gtan mig sgron* presents a fourfold hierarchical classification system, namely, the four vehicles of Tsen men, sTon mun, Mahāyoga, and Atiyoga.[86] As mentioned earlier, in his other writings, the same author advocates another nine-vehicles system that has become the standard in the later Nyingma School, yet it seems that these two doxographic perspectives cause no contradictions in the mind of gNubs chen, as he also clearly evokes the nine-vehicles system in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*. Here, we can see that, as codifying doxography developed in the hands of the Tibetans, Atiyoga became an independent class, rather than just a mode under the inner

[86] For further discussions of this fourfold system and contents of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, see Dalton and van Schaik, "Lighting the Lamp," and Meinert, "Structural Analysis of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*."

tantra Mahāyoga. This suggests that during the codification process differences in doctrine, even small ones, had been noticed and developed. Similarly, the early possible conflation between sTon mun and the great perfection (or *rdzogs chen*) mode of the inner tantra Mahāyoga, had been noticed and even criticized. We see that gNubs chen plainly states that one of the reasons for his composition of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* is to clarify the confusions surrounding sTon mun and Dzogchen; he writes,

> In this section of the *rNal 'byor mig gi bsam gtan,*[87] I compiled in detail [the teachings of sTon mun] because of the mistake [where practitioners were considering] sTon mun and Dzogchen to be similar.[88]

In clarifying the misunderstandings, gNubs chen details the doctrinal differences of the said four vehicles and arranges them in hierarchical order based on their philosophical insight into the non-conceptuality (Tib. *rnam par mi rtog pa*). He explains his methodology as follows:

> The differences of these [four vehicles] are like the rungs of a ladder. Just as there are high and low rungs on a ladder, so are there differences between these four non-conceptualities [of Tsen men, sTon mun, Mahāyoga, and Atiyoga].[89]

Consequently, gNubs chen arranges the four vehicles to be, in ascending order, Tsen men, sTon mun, Mahāyoga, and Atiyoga. For him, those of Tsen men practitioners only understand the non-conceptuality of appearance (Tib. *snang ba mi rtog pa*), whereas sTon mun practitioners enter the non-conceptuality of non-appearance (Tib. *mi snang ba mi*

[87] Another name for the *bSam gtan mig sgron.*
[88] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 186.1-3; rnal 'byor mig gi bsam gtan gyi skabs 'dir/ ston mun dang rdzogs chen cha 'bra bas gol du dogs pa'i phyir rgyas par bkod do. See also Meinert, "Structural Analysis of the *Bsam gtan mig sgron*," 185.
[89] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 60.6-61.1; de dag gi khyad par skad kyi gdang bu bzhin te/ dper na skad gdang la mtho dman yod par dang 'dra ste/ mi rtog pa 'di bzhi yang khyad par yod. See also Meinert, "Structural Analysis of the *Bsam gtan mig sgron*," 188, and Dalton and van Schaik, "Lighting the Lamp," 171.

rtog pa). Going higher on the ladder, Mahāyoga practitioners recognize the nondual non-conceptuality (Tib. *gnyis su med pa'i mi rtog pa*), but it is only the Dzogchen practitioners who naturally and accurately realize the spontaneous non-conceptuality (Tib. *lhun gyis grub pa'i mi rtog pa*). Doctrinally and contemplatively, for gNubs chen, the four systems of non-conceptuality represent a progression of increasing refinement on the soteriological path of ultimate awakening, which essentially asks its practitioners to give up various attachments to discursive thinking (*e.g.*, gradualism, subitism, and nondualism) and artfully strives for the spontaneous presence of their awakened (or more precisely awake) mind to manifest in its natural perfection of suchness.[90] Because in the reality of suchness there is only the spontaneity of nature rather than any intentionality, including the intentionality of eliminating intentionality (gradualism), of no intentionality (subitism), or of its transcendence (nondualism).

All in all, from the above discussion, we see that as early Tibetan Buddhists attempted to understand their received teachings both doctrinally and contemplatively, one of the strategies they took was to codify these different tenets and practices into doxographic systems. Clearly, the teachings of sTon mun were part of that process, as the above discussion has tried to demonstrate. That is to say, after the initial contacts of translation and compilation, Tibetan recipients further interpreted the teachings of sTon mun by comparison, which in turn led to the doxographic codification of these teachings as well.

Nevertheless, as this story of codification and adaptation unfolded further in the history of Tibetan Buddhism, the name of sTon mun eventually disappeared. As for its

[90] A similar characterization of these four approaches in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* can also be seen in Meinert, "Structural Analysis of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*," 188-189.

possible reasons, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes states in his *bSam gtan mig sgron* that the transmission of sTon mun lineage ended due to the lack of spiritual masters or qualified teachers (Tib. *slob dpon*),[91] but the letters of its teachings went on.[92] These teachings were recorded in Dunhuang manuscripts and other Tibetan works like the *bSam gtan mig sgron* and the *Blon po bka'i thang yig*. Yet, as history is always multifaceted, there is another side of the story. Evidence suggests that the disappearance of sTon mun (in terms of its name) in the later development of Tibetan history was also, in part, due to the fact that its teachings were syncretically integrated into other traditions, a topic we will turn to next.[93]

2. The Presentation of Syncretic Integration

In terms of assimilation schemes, generally speaking, doxography highlights differences, whereas syncretic integration relies on similarities. Probably due to their different propensities, practitioners may take one or the other or even a combination of the two strategies to organize and integrate what they receive so as to accomplish their specific religious and/or contemplative goals. With respect to the teachings of sTon mun,

[91] In fact, according to the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, during the reign of gLang dar ma (r. 838-842), the transmission of the causal vehicles (Tib. *rgyu'i theg pa*) disappeared due to the fact that the transmission of the spiritual masters of the characteristic vehicles, another name for causal vehicles, disappeared (Tib. *nub*). Specially, in explaining the disappearance of the causal vehicles, an interlaced comment in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* says, "During the reign of gLang dar ma, Venerable Ye shes dbang po encountered [some] hindrance [*i.e.*, he died], due to which the transmission of the spiritual masters of the characteristic [vehicles] disappeared (glang dar ma'i ring la btsun pa ye shes dbang po bar chad du gyur pas mtshan nyid kyi slob dpon brgyud pa nub)" (gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 15.3). See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 92-95.

[92] For a more detailed account, see gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 15.1-5.

[93] This account concerning the disappearance of sTon mun in Tibet is different from the story recorded in traditional Tibetan Buddhist histories. Therein, Tibetan historians usually report that the disappearance of sTon mun came about because Moheyan, the representative of sTon mun teachings, was roundly defeated by Kamalaśīla, the representative of Indian Madhyamaka teachings, in a royally sponsored debate. As a result, the teachings of sTon mun were banned and expunged from the soils of Tibet; see, *e.g.*, *dBa'/sBa bzhed* (Wangdu and Diemberger (trans), *dBa' bzhed: The Royal Narrative Concerning the Bringing of the Buddha's Doctrine to Tibet*); Bu ston, *Chos 'byung* (Szerb, *Bu ston's History of Buddhism in Tibet*); and Houston, *Sources for a History of the bSam yas Debate.*

in addition to the hierarchical doxography discussed above, there is also the syncretic integration illustrated in the Dunhuang manuscripts of ITJ 689, PT 699, PT 626, and PT 634, where the teachings of sTon mun are syncretically integrated with those of Mahāyoga and/or proto-Dzogchen.

As presented above, the similarities early Tibetan recipients found between sTon mun and Mahāyoga/proto-Dzogchen probably include the soteriological assertion of sudden awakening and the idea of non-action to realize such a fruition. Yet, it seems that the "syncretic activity" early Tibetan contemplatives drew from these similarities at first is to practice sTon mun and Mahāyoga/proto-Dzogchen side by side (*i.e.*, not intermingled) with each other. Nonetheless, from the evidence below, it seems that some of these contemplatives did not stop there, for they went further from the "side-by-side syncretism" to a more integrated syncretism, in which sTon mun ideas were interpreted in Mahāyoga/proto-Dzogchen terminology.

While we cannot ascertain the exact reason for such a syncretic integration, it is possible to argue that as Tibetan contemplatives simultaneously practiced sTon mun and Mahāyoga/proto-Dzogchen, they also found these traditions following some similar logic for contemplation, *e.g.*, the principles of suddenness and spontaneity. This finding, I argue and will discuss more in the coming chapters, was most likely facilitated by these traditions' sudden-awakening soteriology that effectually puts them in the same category as fruitional vehicles. Accordingly, owing to this contemplative compatibility, some Tibetan recipients of these traditions innovatively interpreted the teachings of one tradition with the teachings of another tradition. This syncretic movement, I believe, for the Tibetan contemplative recipients, not only deepened their understanding of the

received teachings but also facilitated their contemplative realization of awakening by including as many insights from similar teachings as possible. Put simply, this syncretic integration of insights from different teachings, for the Tibetan recipients, must benefit them doctrinally and contemplatively without threatening their tradition's continuity and logical integrity.

First, let me present some textual evidence to justify the above argument. As briefly reviewed in the Introduction and mentioned several times earlier, the contents of Dunhuang Tibetan manuscripts ITJ 689 and PT 699, when considered together, strongly suggest a syncretic integration between the teachings of sTon mun and proto-Dzogchen/ Mahāyoga. This is seen not only from the circumstantial evidence, in which the root text *Lung chung* or the *Small Treatise* in ITJ 689 has been doubtlessly confirmed as a sTon mun text[94] and its commentary in PT 699 is implied by the corresponding colophon to be belonging to the category of Atiyoga, another name for Dzogchen. It is also because of the syncretic use of terminology seen in both the root text and the commentary. For example, as a sTon mun treatise, the *Lung chung* advocates the practice of "viewing one's own mind" (Tib. *rang gyi sems la bltas*) to realize the non-substantiality and non-conceptuality of one's awakened mind. This state of non-conceptuality, the *Lung chung* further teaches, is self-endowed with non-conceptual lucidity, and being so, it is called the reflexive primordial awareness (Tib. *rang rig ye shes*), an important idea also seen in the later Dzogchen tradition.[95] Furthermore, in the *Lung chung*, the sTon mun

[94] For example, the root text *Lung chung* is quoted several times by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in the sTon mun chapter of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* to explain the teachings of sTon mun. In addition, the text itself clearly states that the recorded teachings were first entrusted to Mahākāśyapa and later to Bodhidharma, which is a unquestionable evidence indicating that the text belongs to the sTon mun lineage.
[95] For a summary of the sTon mun teachings in the *Lung chung*, see, *e.g.*, Meinert, "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs-chen*," 291-293.

fruition of revealing one's reflexive primordial awareness is also said to be the attainment of self-liberation (Tib. *rang grol*), also a well-known Dzogchen/Mahāyoga contemplative ideal, and the commentary in PT 699 further glosses this attainment with the tantric idea of "attain[ing] instantaneously in the adamantine-like *samādhi*, the *bhumi* of the Buddha, [that of] all-encompassing light." [96]

With regard to the above syncretic use of sTon mun and Dzogchen/Mahāyoga terminologies, in her paper entitled "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs chen*," Carmen Meinert informs us that, according to the Nyingma scholar-master Mipham Rinpoche's (1846-1912) commentary to the *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba*, the fruition or *bhumi* of "all-encompassing light" (Tib. *kun du 'od*) is said to be in accordance with the Dzogchen fruition, namely, the "*bhumi* of the great accumulation wheel of the [seed] syllables" (Tib. *yi ge 'khor lo tshogs chen gyi sa*).[97] Accordingly, the exegesis in the commentary of PT 699 practically puts the sTon mun attainment of self-liberation taught by the root text of ITJ 689 in the same category as the Dzogchen fruition. This fruitional connection, as Meinert argues in her paper,[98] probably is philosophically threaded through the idea of non-conceptuality that is also the reflexive primordial awareness. Thus, conjoining elements of Chan meditation with Dzogchen fruition, Meinert concludes that the author(s) of ITJ 689 and PT 699 seem to reside in "an intermediary space somewhere between the Chinese *Chan* Buddhist heritage and the not-yet-systematically-formulated Tibetan *Rdzogs chen* system."[99]

Regarding the above syncretic characteristics seen in ITJ 689 and PT 699, Sam van

96 Meinert, "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs-chen*," 299.
97 For her detailed argument, see Meinert, "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs-chen*," 301-303.
98 See Meinert, "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs-chen*," 303.
99 Ibid.

Schaik and Jacob Dalton offer another interpretation. With the help of Dunhuang manuscripts PT 626 and PT 634, they argue that the commentary in PT 699 is better understood as a commentary on the sTon mun treatise *Lung chung* in ITJ 689 from the Mahāyoga perspective.[100] Based on their similar contents and identical phrases and terms, van Schaik and Dalton suggest that PT 626, PT 634, and PT 699 are almost certainly penned by the same author.[101] Then, they show that PT 626 and PT 634 are commentaries on the same Mahāyoga ritual text, detailing the three *samādhis* of the development stage (Tib. *bskyed rim*) using explicit Chan ideas to interpret its first or thusness *samādhi* (Tib. *de bzhin nyid kyi ting nge dzin*).[102] Based on the similar references in PT 699, van Schaik and Dalton thus propose that the same author, when composing PT 699, had the same tripartite *samādhi* structure in mind.[103] Subsequently, they put forth the view that the author of PT 699 was really interpreting the sTon mun ideas in the *Lung chung* in terms of Mahāyoga ritual techniques toward an audience well-versed in the Mahāyoga practices and scriptures.[104]

Be it to reside in the intermediary space between sTon mun and proto-Dzogchen or to address a Mahāyoga audience, the contents of ITJ 689, PT 699, PT 626, and PT 634 clearly exemplify some Tibetan contemplative recipients' innovative participation in dealing with their received teachings, particularly those of sTon mun, Mahāyoga and/or proto-Dzogchen. This innovative participation, I argue, when combining the conclusions of both Meinert's and van Schaik and Dalton's research, can be seen as a syncretic integration done by the Tibetan recipients to try to include as many insights from

[100] Van Schaik and Dalton, "Where Chan and Tantra Meet," 68.
[101] Ibid, 65.
[102] Ibid, 66-67.
[103] Ibid, 67-68.
[104] Ibid, 68-69.

available and/or similar teachings as possible to accomplish their desired contemplative soteriology through the immediate and spontaneous manifestation of one's reflexive primordial awareness. Such a direct manifestation of one's primordial awareness has been seen in the teachings of Shenhui discussed in the previous chapter, and will be discussed in the teachings of sTon mun and Dzogchen presented in the next two chapters. As my above presentation has tried to show, this logic of immediacy in contemplation inspired the Tibetan recipients to syncretically integrate the teachings of sTon mun with those of proto-Dzogchen within the broader religious milieu of Mahāyoga tantras, for such an integration not only benefited them doctrinally and contemplatively but also did not threaten their tradition's continuity and logical integrity. Nonetheless, as a result of this integration (or changing the representation), sTon mun as an independent doctrinal system, not to mention as an independent tradition, eventually disappeared in the later years of Tibetan history.

III. Disappearance as Connection: A Missing Link between Chan and Dzogchen?

With respect to the above syncretic development of sTon mun that eventually led to its disappearance in Tibet, Wilfred C. Smith's idea of a cumulative religious tradition can be insightful. Commenting on this idea of Smith's, Hendrik Vroom writes, "[R]eligious traditions are in a continual process of interpenetration. Adherents of one religion derive insights and practices from adherents of other religious traditions. That applies not only to religious traditions, but also to currents within a certain religion."[105] He further analyzes, "Since religious traditions include many currents with divergent emphases, one may not place them over against one another as closed units. There is room for learning

[105] Vroom, "Syncretism and Dialogue," 27.

from other traditions. Since people aspire to an interpretation of the whole of the reality they experience, they will be inclined to integrate as many insights from elsewhere as possible."[106]

The Tibet of the late-8th-early-10th centuries was a society nourishing concomitant currents of Buddhist traditions. sTon mun, as one of the currents, participated in the continual interpenetration process of Tibetan Buddhist traditions of that period. In this interpenetration process, sTon mun emerged with a diversified beginning, developed in a vibrant yet syncretic religious milieu with practitioners rather freely crossing sectarian boundaries, and eventually disappeared as an independent tradition in Tibetan history primarily due to the syncretic assimilation scheme contemporary Tibetan recipients undertook.

In particular, we see that practitioners of sTon mun and Mahāyoga/proto-Dzogchen, in Vroom's words, "derive[d] insights and practices" from each other. Probably with the intention of "aspir[ing] to an interpretation of the whole of the reality" they experienced, these different groups of Tibetan contemplative recipients "integrate[d] as many insights from [similar traditions] as possible" in order to realize their desired soteriological fruition of instantaneous and spontaneous awakening through these traditions' compatible logic of immediacy for contemplation. In the process of this syncretic integration, sTon mun disappeared, but it disappeared in the Wilfred Smith's sense of the cumulative process of another tradition, *i.e.*, in the continuous and cumulative creation process of the Dzogchen tradition. In this rationale, the disappearance of sTon mun as an independent tradition in Tibetan history is not just another religious sect disappearing in history, but it offers us something deeper to reflect upon, for example, a possible link connecting Chan

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[106] Ibid, 32.

and Dzogchen both historically and contemplatively.

In terms of historical connection, what insights can we obtain from the idea that the disappearance of sTon mun offers us a link between Chan and Dzogchen? As reviewed in the Introduction, various scholars have noticed the "striking similarities [between Chan and Dzogchen] as well as the references to Chan in Nyingma [Dzogchen] literature."[107] Yet, the specifics of how Chan and Dzogchen may have interacted with each other have not been sufficiently given. Our encounter narrative informs us that the lacuna regarding the specifics of connection may ironically be filled through the disappearance of a religious tradition, especially under the condition when the traditions of encounter bear similar insights and practices, and the recipients are more concerned with realizing their contemplative or soteriological goal(s) rather than preserving sectarian boundaries.

Generally speaking, historical studies obtained from the sociopolitical perspective have usually considered the development of religious traditions as sectarian schools rising or falling in power due to the social and/or political agenda of the participants. Thus, following sectarian boundaries, these studies often overlook the aforementioned concerns of the contemplative recipients and thereby fail to ferret out the subtle philosophical and/or contemplative details that associate traditions like Chan and Dzogchen. To ferret out those details, one must change the perspective. Consequently, our encounter narrative depicting the disappearance of sTon mun in Tibet has been done from the contemplative recipient's perspective, which is meant to obtain the necessary specifics. Given this understanding, as an alternative to the sociopolitical perspective usually taken for historical studies, the contemplative recipient's perspective employed in

[107] Germano, "Architecture and Absence in the Secret Tantric History of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*)," 217. This passage was quoted in the Introduction of this dissertation as well.

our encounter narrative not only deepens our appreciation of the philosophical and contemplative nuances of the associated traditions, but also extends our reach beyond the historical so that we can better recognize the values of various changes the historical movements of religious traditions may yield.

To be sure, these values of changes lie in the specifics that are being ferreted out. In our case, they are associated with the religious or spiritual insights derived from the contemplative specifics related to the teachings of Chan and Dzogchen. As these spiritual insights transcend sectarian boundaries, the disappearance of sTon mun certainly is then not just a sectarian sect falling in power due to the participants' sociopolitical agenda, but a result of different groups of practitioners or concerned people seeking a presence in the direct experience of reality by integrating as many insights from similar traditions as possible. For our case of study, these insights are the teachings and practices related to the logic of immediacy in contemplation. In this way, in addition to the specific contemplative teachings, the disappearance of sTon mun that links Chan and Dzogchen contemplatively also informs us that the logic of immediacy in contemplation, the subject matter of our research, is not an isolated phenomenon. It had emerged, and thus can emerge, with different emphases in different times and places.

Furthermore, our encounter narrative regarding the disappearance of sTon mun, I would argue, also prompts us to look further into the meaning of sectarian boundary. Evidently, from our case study, we see that spiritual insights can be, and in fact are, shared by different sectarian schools (and for that matter by different religious traditions as well). Thereby, sectarian boundaries are not necessarily demarcated on doctrinal differences, for similar doctrines are shared by different sectarian schools. For example,

in Buddhism, we see that both Nyingma and Bön traditions teach Dzogchen, and the practice of Pure Land is not limited to the School of Pure Land. On the other hand, similar insights from different sectarian schools can also be integrated together under one sectarian roof, as long as these insights do not threaten the school's *continuity* and *logical integrity*. Therefore, in our investigation, early Tibetan recipients of sTon mun and proto-Dzogchen not only practiced these teachings side by side with each other but also syncretically integrated them together probably with the rationale of trying to make the best out of similar insights of different traditions.

In regard to a tradition's continuity, the syncretic integration of insights from different teachings must occur centering around a native or dominant component, into which foreign or weak elements are integrated, and in the process, the continuity of the native/dominant is thereby maintained but at the cost that the original identities of the foreign/weak elements are thus changed.[108] In the case of sTon mun being integrated into the teachings of Dzogchen within the broader tantric context of Mahāyoga, we clearly see that the dominant force at the time was the tantric teachings. Insofar as the sTon mun

[108] The contradistinction of the native/dominant and the foreign/weak, however, is not always made in terms of the nationalities or origins of the traditions or doctrinal systems. If we juxtapose the development of Chan in China as presented in Chapter 1 with the development of sTon mun in Tibet as presented in the current chapter, we clearly see that in terms of their origins both were foreign to the Chinese and the Tibetans. But, in China, the syncretic development of Chan helped it grow out of its traditional Buddhist context and form a unique identity that has lasted to this very day, whereas the syncretic assimilation of sTon mun in Tibet only brought about the disappearance of its name. Here, we naturally ask: Why? And, the answer, I would say, lies in the contradistinction of the native/dominant and the foreign/weak *in the minds of the recipients*. In China, as the teachings of *chan* or *dhyāna* syncretically developed with indigenous Chinese ideas and terminologies, what had been changed was not the identity/nomenclature of *chan* but its contents, since the minds of the Chinese participants (or developers) still revolved around the *chan* that hence occupied the dominant position. Thus, in the process, what had been assimilated into lost its identity, and eventually the teachings of *chan* were further consolidated into an independent tradition called Chan. On the other hand, even though both sTon mun and Mahāyoga traditions were foreign to the Tibetans, but, with the benefit of historical hindsight, we can be sure that, after the fall of the Yarlung Tibetan empire, the tantric traditions were getting popular, thus becoming dominant. In this process of becoming dominant, the tantric teachings must have occupied the minds of the Tibetan practitioners to the extent that they considered them the mainstream, into which other small currents like sTon mun could only converge.

teachings were beneficial to the practitioners of early Dzogchen, they were still foreign teachings, and being foreign, they needed to be integrated under the umbrella of Dzogchen so that the threat of these foreign teachings can be absorbed and consolidated into the continuity of the native/dominant teachings.

But how exactly did the teachings of sTon mun benefit the practitioners of proto-Dzogchen? Given what we have presented above, I would say, not only did sTon mun not threaten the continuous creation process of the Dzogchen tradition, but it also specifically benefited the tradition by reinforcing the integrity of its logic. This logic, for both sTon mun and Dzogchen, centered on their similar principles for contemplation, *i.e.*, immediacy and spontaneity, as well as on their similar soteriological fruition of instantaneous awakening. So, both traditions advocated the attainment of self-liberation through the immediate and spontaneous manifestation of one's reflexive primordial awareness, which has been touched upon briefly above and will be discussed in detail in the next two chapters. Therein, I will demonstrate that, as in the case of Shenhui's sudden teaching in the previous chapter, their logic of immediacy in contemplation effectively takes the fruition as the path and thus puts sTon mun and Dzogchen in the same category as fruitional vehicles. In that way, sTon mun, as a tradition of encounter, not only plays the role of a bridging link connecting Chan and Dzogchen historically, but also connects the two traditions contemplatively, namely, through the contemplative principles of immediacy and spontaneity.

Given the idea of syncretic integration that assimilates insights from different traditions but does not threaten the dominant tradition's continuity and logic integrity, sectarian boundaries are fluid, especially for those contemplative recipients who try to

assimilate as many available insights as possible to accomplish their contemplative or soteriological goal(s). With this rationale, no doctrines or practices belong exclusively to any religious or sectarian school. For the contemplative recipients, as long as they see fit doctrinally, contemplatively, and even genealogically, they will flexibly utilize all the teachings and practices available to them in order to achieve their objective.[109] Hence, we can say that syncretic integration is a natural part of the continuous and cumulative creation process of any religious tradition. What is important in this cumulative process should not just be about whether the teachings of the tradition have been maintained to be "pure" or not.[110] Nor should it be just about which sectarian tradition has risen or fallen in dominance. Rather, it should be centered on, in Vroom's words, "aspir[ing] to an interpretation of the whole of the reality [the participants] experience." Thus, the disappearance of sTon mun as an independent tradition in Tibetan history has the value as an event indicating special concerns of Tibetan Buddhist recipients at the time, rather

[109] Strangely, some Buddhologists have a certain fixed notion of sectarian boundaries; they develop the idea of associating certain sūtras, practices, or doctrinal systems with certain sectarian schools. For example, in Chinese Buddhism, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarika-sūtra* (or the *Lotus Sūtra*) is usually associated with the Tiantai School, whereas the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* is associated with the Huayan School. Yet, does the *Saddharmapuṇḍarika-sūtra* belong to the Tiantai School, even though it is one of its basic scriptures? Certainly, one cannot say that the *Saddharmapuṇḍarika-sūtra* exclusively belongs to the Tiantai School. Subsequently, from the recipient's perspective, how can one then definitively say that another tradition, say Chan, is influenced by the Tiantai School because it employs the teachings of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarika-sūtra*? Similarly, when some Chan masters take teachings from the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, can we then say that, simply by that fact, these masters are influenced by the Huayan School? Apparently, the answers to these questions are negative, for not only the scriptures but also various Buddhist practices and doctrinal systems, they are all in the "public domain" in which all recipients or participants can access and use them in the ways they see fit according to their understandings. From the recipient's perspective, to establish sectarian influence, Buddhologists cannot follow the boundaries set up by scriptures, practices, or doctrinal systems that are in the public domain; rather, they need to go into the "private sector" that consists of particular interpretations and terminologies from the targeted sectarian tradition to locate conclusive evidence.

[110] In fact, as Rosalind Shaw and Charles Steward analyze, "The premise that 'pure = authentic' ... tends to be the dominant reading in discourses of nationalist, ethnic or regional identity, as well as those of religious movements which are categorized as 'fundamentalist' or 'nativist'. Such discourses are commonly anti-syncretic, involving the erasure of elements deemed alien from particular religious and ritual forms. Selected forms may be identified as foreign and extirpated, or alternatively recast and retained through claims that they have really always been 'ours', thereby deleting former religious syntheses from authorized cultural memory" (Shaw and Steward, "Introduction: Problematizing Syncretism," 8).

than just a religious sect disappearing into historical oblivion.

To recapitulate, what I have underscored above indicates that the special concerns of those Tibetan contemplative recipients seem to converge onto the logic of immediacy in contemplation that is predicated on the immediate and spontaneous manifestation of one's reflexive primordial awareness. That being so, similar to what I have argued for the case of Chan, in which the various negotiations early Chan contemplatives participated in are to pursue a "pure" Chan, the disappearance of sTon mun can also be seen as a result coming out of contemporary Tibetan contemplatives' pursuit of a "pure" practice, albeit through a syncretic integration of the insights available them. In this pursuit, they probably did not think of the idea of "syncretism" but only tried hard to learn from their received teachings. So, they integrated as many insights from different traditions as possible and strived for the direct and spontaneous embodiment of one's awakened mind. In such an embodiment, the contemplative effortlessly reveals his/her reflexive awareness that enables him/her to embrace all possibilities with wonder, openness, insight, and tenderness. It is to further understand this spontaneous embodiment that we will delve into the teachings of sTon mun and Dzogchen in the next two chapters.

Chapter 4. Oneness or Wholeness?
The Contemplative Significance of Simultaneity in sTon mun, the "Sudden School" in Tibet

Continuing the encounter narrative presented in the previous chapter and further delving into the variations of the idea of immediacy, Chapter 4 examines the teachings of sTon mun in detail. While various studies have furthered our understanding of the sTon mun teachings based on Dunhuang manuscripts and early Nyingma texts,[1] I feel that the contemplative significance of the teachings, particularly, that of the doctrine and practice of simultaneity or simultaneous access (Tib. *cig car 'jug pa*), has not been properly investigated, especially from the contemplative perspective undercored in this research. Thus, to provide a remedy with the aid of a contemplative lens, I would like to present two different understandings of the sTon mun teachings, which, I hope, will, on the one hand, reveal the various philosophical and contemplative layers embedded in the sTon mun idea of simultaneity and, on the other hand, illustrate the possibility of reading distinctively the idea of immediacy by practitioners of different philosophical or contemplative orientations.

The first rendition is given by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in his *bSam gtan mig*

[1] See *e.g.*, Lalou, "Document tibétain sur l'expansion du dhyana chinois"; Demiéville, *Le Coucile de Lhasa*; Tucci, *Minor Buddhist Texts: Part II*, 60-68; Kimura,, "Tonkō shutsudo no chibetto bun zenshū bunken no seikaku" and "Tonkō shutsudo chibetto-bun shahon Stein 709"; Obata, "Pelliot 116 bunken ni mieru shozenji no kenkyū" and "Kodai chibetto ni okeru tonmonpa (zenshū) no nagare"; Broughton, "Early Ch'an Schools in Tibet"; Gómez, "The Direct and the Gradual Approaches of Zen Master Mahayana"; Ueyama, "The Study of Tibetan Chan Manuscripts Recovered from Tun-huang: A Review of the Field and its Prospects"; Yanagida (ed), *Daruma no goroku: Ninyū shigyō roku*; Okimoto, "Chibetto yaku *ninyu shigyo ron* nit suite"; Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 86-106; Kvaerne, "'The Great Perfection' in the Tradition of the Bonpos"; Tanaka and Robertson, "A Ch'an Text from Tun-huang: Implications for Ch'an Influence on Tibetan Buddhism"; Faber, "A Tibetan Dunhuang Treatise on Simultaneous Enlightenment: The *dMyigs su myed pa tshul gcig pa'i gzhung*"; Otokawa, "New Fragments of the *rNal 'byor chen por bsgom pa'i don* from Tabo"; Meinert, "Chinese *Chan* and Tibetan *rDzogs-chen*: Preliminary Remarks on Two Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts"; and van Schaik and Dalton, "Where Chan and Tantra Meet: Tibetan Syncretism in Dunhuang"; Huang and Liu, ""Sangye lunzheng zhong de 'dasheng heshang jian': 'Dunru' shuo de kaocha"; and Shen, "Xizangwen wenxian zhong de Heshang Moheyan ji qi jiaofa: Yige chuangzao chulai de chuantong."

sgron (*The Lamp for the Eye of Dhyāna*). In the presentation, I will show that basically, gNubs chen considers sTon mun *a causal vehicle* (Ch. *yinsheng* 因乘; Tib. *rgyu'i theg pa*) derived from the sūtras of definitive meaning (Tib. *nges don*) and interprets its sudden teaching as a direct access to the unborn ultimate without alternation (Tib. *re mos*). But this direct access without alternation (of sTon mun), for gNubs chen, is eventually a oneness or monism, for it regards only the ultimate as true. As such, the suddenness of sTon mun is a mistaken understanding which not only misses the nonduality (Tib. *gnyis su med pa*) or inseparability (Tib. *dbyer med*) of the two truths but also creates a conceptual alternation, as it considers the ultimate as true but the conventional as untrue. In this way, the sTon mun suddenness without alternation ironically ends up in a conceptual alternation that separates in actuality what isn't separate.

With gNubs chen's presentation of sTon mun in order, based on related Dunhuang manuscripts, both in Chinese and in Tibetan, I then present an alternative understanding of the sTon mun simultaneity to demonstrate the subtle philosophical and contemplative layers, thus hermeneutic plasticity, associated with the sTon mun idea of simultaneous access in particular and the idea of immediacy in general. Therein, I will show that the simultaneity of sTon mun is actually an access to the all-encompassing mind-source (Ch. *xinyuan* 心源), which, though it contains both the two truths, is referred to as the "ultimate meaning" (Ch. *shengyi* 勝義; Tib. *don dam pa*) particularly in Moheyan's teachings. I surmise that it was this ambiguous reference that led gNubs chen to interpret the simultaneity of sTon mun as a oneness. Given this new understanding, I further analyze the difference between oneness and the wholeness that derives from the sTon mun teaching of the all-encompassing mind-source and that gives rise to the sTon mun

understanding of nonduality and spontaneity.

In exploring its deeper meaning, I will show that the all-encompassing wholeness of sTon mun simultaneously embraces the two truths as they interfuse each other to establish a nondual dynamic. Philosophically, the nondual dynamic of the two truths also implies a nondual, holistic dynamic of being and knowing similar to the one given in Shenhui's sudden Chan. However, contemplatively speaking, unlike Shenhui's integrating gradualness in the context of suddenness, the wholeness of the sTon mun simultaneity asks its practitioner to engage the conventional in the manner of the ultimate while embodying the ultimate in the conventional. Thus, in addition to what we learned from Shenhui's sudden Chan, the sTon mun simultaneity adds to our knowledge that the logic of immediacy in contemplation demands of its practitioner to engage all conventional phenomena, but the engagement must be done in the manner of ultimacy so that the practitioner realizes the logic of immediacy without falling into the bondage of conventionality. As this demand takes the whole as the path, it consequently places sTon mun in the camp of the fruitional vehicle (Ch. *guosheng* 果乘; Tib. *'bras bu'i theg pa*) within the sūric traditions just as Shenhui's sudden Chan. As a result, together with Shenhui's sudden Chan, the two understandings of the sTon mun simultaneity demonstrate, philosophically and contemplatively, the various layers underlying, as well as the variations of, the idea of immediacy.

I. gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's Understanding

As discussed in the previous chapter, one of the reasons why gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes composed the *bSam gtan mig sgron* was the concern over people's mistaking sTon mun as Dzogchen mainly due to their similar terminology of *actionless*

(Tib. *bya ba med pa*) or *effortless* (Tib. *rtsol ba med pa*) meditative practices.[2] To clarify this confusion, he detailed the doctrines and practices of four vehicles or traditions, *i.e.*, Tsen men, sTon mun, Mahāyoga, and Dzogchen (or Atiyoga) in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*. It is based on his presentation in this work that I explore gNubs chen's understanding of the sTon mun teachings

A. sTon mun: A Causal Vehicle Derived from the Sūtras of Definitive Meaning

Writing a treatise that takes *bsam gtan* or meditation as a central motif, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes begins his *bSam gtan mig sgron* with discussion on some general meditation topics such as finding meditation places, making vows, preparing oneself physically and psychologically, and explaining some general antidotes for certain meditation situations before going into the teachings of respective vehicles.[3] In the section on preparation activities (Tib. *sngon du bya ba*), he unequivocally states that the first task is to develop the wisdom of hearing (Tib. *mnyan pa'i shes rab*), and with respect to this wisdom of hearing, the causal and fruitional vehicles (Tib. *rgyu 'bras theg pa*) are in complete agreement, however, their presentations of view, meditation, conduct, and fruition (Tib. *lta sgom spyod pa 'bras bu*) are not.[4]

Concerning these topics, the causal vehicle, gNubs chen explains, has the two branches of Cig car ba (sTon mun or the Simultaneists) and Rim gyis pa (Tsen men or the Gradualists) that are, respectively, for those who posses sharp and dull faculties (Tib. *dbang po rno rtul*). He further elaborates,

[2] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 186.1-3 and 490.3-5; see also the discussion in **The Presentation of Hierarchical Doxography** of Chapter 3 of this dissertation.
[3] See chapters one and two of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*; gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 1-45.
[4] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 13.2-3 and 14.6-15.1.

> With respect to that [*i.e.*, the two branches of the causal vehicle], the Gradualists [propound] the doctrinal position of Indian master Kamalaśīla, [which is based on] the sūtras of provisional teachings and the philosophical scriptures of imperfect completeness. The Simultaneists are the heirs of Kaśyapa and Master Dharmora (*i.e.*, Bodhidharma). ... The last of the lineage, Hashang Mahāyan; his philosophical scriptures of simultaneous access are scriptures [that are derived from] the sūtras of complete perfection.[5]

Here, two points are worthy of our attention, particularly, one related to the Council of Tibet and the other to the two categories of causal and fruitional vehicles. I will briefly touch upon the former and then focus our attention more on the latter.

On the issue related to the Council of Tibet, what is of interest is that, given his proximity in time to the alleged controversy between the two masters,[6] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes would have the historical opportunity to give a close account of the event. But, his report in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* mentions nothing that may suggest an ugly debate between Kamalaśīla and Moheyan, not to mention Moheyan's disgraceful departure and the expunging of his teachings from Tibet reported in the accounts of later Tibetan Buddhist historians and commentators.[7]

Yet the fact that he uses Tsen men (literally Gradual Gate) and sTon mun (literally Sudden Gate), the Chinese equivalents of Tibetan Rim gyis pa and Cig car ba,[8] to

[5] Ibid, 23.5-24.6; de la rim gyis pa ni/ rgya dkar po'i slob dpon ka mā la shi la'i 'dod gzhung ste/ drang ba don gyi mdo sde yongs su ma rdzogs pa'i gzhung ngo/ cig char 'jug pa ni/ 'od srungs dang/ slob dpon dhar mo ra las brgyud pa ni/ ... /(24.5) des brgyud pa'i tha ma ha shang ma hā yan gyi gzhung cig car 'jug pa ste/ yongs su rdzogs pa'i mdo sde'i gzhung ngo.

[6] Even though the dates of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes are still very much in dispute, his proximity in time to the Council of Tibet is however historically established. According to one historical account, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes was born in the year of 832 CE and lived for 111 years (Dudjom Rinpoche, *The rNying ma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, 607-614), but other accounts place his birth year to be 772 CE (van Schaik, "The Early Days of the Great Perfection," 178) or the late 10th century (Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 102). If we take his birth year to be 772, it implies that gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes could have witnessed the Council of Tibet, if it did occur.

[7] Thus, the fact that gNubs chen does not mention any thing suggesting an ugly debate between Kamalaśīla and Moheyan is another evidence supporting current scholarly views that the Council of Tibet as such did not actually occur.

[8] For a discussion on the equivalence between the Chinese term *dun* 頓 (suddenness) and the Tibetan

represent the traditions of the two masters, strongly suggests that there must have existed discussions among the Tibetans concerning the issue of gradualness versus suddenness, regardless if the debate itself took place or not. The many Dunhuang Tibetan catechetic anthologies and treatises as well as Kamalaśīla's *Bhāvanākrama* trilogy provide further evidences for such an understanding. Accordingly, could it be possible that, as argued in the previous chapter, the Council of Tibet actually consisted of a series of catechetic exchanges, in person and/or in letter, between the practitioners of the two traditions? There were no ugly debates, no disgraceful defeats, but only highly engaged exchanges attempting to clarify doctrinal differences and their associated confusions.

In this way, we could also see that part of the purpose of gNubs chen's juxtaposition of Kamalaśīla's Tsen men and Moheyan's sTon mun teachings was to participate in that project of clarifying the confusion surrounding the two systems. Perhaps, to the surprise of later Tibetan Buddhist historians and commentators,[9] gNubs chen's characterization of the two masters' teachings diametrically diverges from their accounts, in which not only Moheyan's sTon mun teachings are inferior to those of Kamalaśīla's Tsen men, but also they become the epitome of mistaken heresies. However, from the quoted passage, we can see, for gNubs chen, not only are the teachings of simultaneous access not a heresy, but they are derived from the sūtras of complete perfection (Tib. *yongs su rdzogs*

term *cig car* (instantaneity or simultaneity), see, *e.g.*, Stein, "Illumination subite on saisie simultanée, not sur la terminologie chinoise et tibétaine" or "Sudden Illumination or Simultaneous Comprehension: Remarks on Chinese and Tibetan Terminology" in Peter N. Gregory's edited volume, *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought*.

[9] Perhaps, it was partially due to gNubs chen Sangs rgya ye shes's different characterization of the two masters' teachings that made the later Tibetan Buddhist historians and commentators neglect the *bSam gtan mig sgron* not only in their discussions on the controversy between Kamalaśīla and Moheyan but also in their discussions on the development of Mahāyoga and Atiyoga, even though this work has been at least known by gZhon nu dpal (1392-1481, the author of the *Deb ther sngon po* or the *Blue Annals*). According to Kapstein, the text was widely transmitted through roughly the thirteenth century, after which time it virtually disappeared; see Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism*, 73. If it had not been rediscovered in the 1970s, this important work of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes might only be placed in the corners of remote monasteries and sink into eternal oblivion.

pa) or definitive meaning (Tib. *nges don*); that is to say, they do not require interpretation to access a deepr or more profound perspective. Consequently, gNubs chen's above characterization of the sTon mun teachings can reveal another piece of "inconvenient truth" to the development of sTon mun in Tibet and inspire us to further reflect upon the issues associated with the demonization of Hvashang Moheyan in the later history of Tibetan Buddhism.[10]

On the issue of causal and fruitional vehicles, the above quoted passage contains the message that, by the time of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, these two categories have already been applied respectively to sūtric and tantric traditions in Tibet. In the *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba* (*The Garland of Views, the Quintessential Instructions*; hereafter *lTa phreng*) attributed to Padmasambhava, sūtric and tantric traditions are classified under the titles of characteristic vehicle (Tib. *mtshan nyid kyi theg pa*) and vajra vehicle (Tib. *rdo rje'i theg pa*), and yet it does not mention the names of causal and fruitional vehicles.[11] Even though we know that in the later history of Tibetan Buddhism it is almost taken for granted that, on the one hand, causal vehicle, characteristic vehicle, perfection vehicle (Tib. *phar phyin gyi theg pa*), and sūtric traditions are seen as synonymous and, on the

[10] On the issues associated with the demonization of Hvashang Moheyan in the later history of Tibetan Buddhism, see, *e.g.*, Sven Bretfeld, "The 'Great Debate' of bSam yas: Construction and Deconstruction of a Tibetan Buddhist Myth"; Huang and Liu, "Sangye lunzheng zhong de 'dasheng heshang jian': 'Dunru' shuo de kaocha"; and Shen, "Xizangwen wenxian zhong de Heshang Moheyan ji qi jiaofa: Yige chuangzao chulai de chuantong." See also R. Jackson, "Sa skya paṇḍita's Account of the bSam yas Debate: History as Polemic"; D. Jackson, "Sa-skya Paṇḍita the 'Polemicist': Ancient Debates and Modern Interpretations"; van der Kuijp, "On the Sources for Sa skya Paṇḍita's Notes on the Bsam yas Debate"; Broido, "Sa-skya Paṇḍita, the White Panacea and the Hva-Shang Doctrine"; and Ruegg, *Buddha-nature, Mind and the Problem of Gradualism in a Comparative Perspective*, 63-92.

[11] On the Buddhist teachings, the *lTa phreng* says, "As to the path that transcends the world, there are two categories: (a) The analytic path. (b) The Vajrayāna. (a) i. Śrāvakayāna. ii. Pratyekabuddhayāna. iii. Bodhisattvayāna. ... (b) The Vajrayāna is of threefold: I. The Kriyā tantra. II. The Ubhayā tantra. III. The Yoga tantra. ... III. The view of those who have entered the path of the Yoga tantra is twofold: i. *Thub pa rgyud kyi theg pa*, the Exoteric Yoga. ii. *Thabs rgyud kyi theg pa*, the Esoteric Yoga. ... ii. The view of those who have entered the path of the Esoteric Yoga is of threefold: I. The mode of development. II. The mode of achievement. III. The mode of the Great Perfection" (Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 153-155).

other hand, fruitional vehicle, vajra vehicle, mantra vehicle (Tib. *sngags kyi theg pa*), and tantric traditions are also identical, the question is: What is the rationale behind the equivalence of these two sets of categories? Put another way, what are the definitions of these vehicles, especially those of causal and fruitional vehicles?[12]

In the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, even though the name of fruitional vehicle only appears once in passing, the fact that gNubs chen only classifies Tsen men and sTon mun under the category of causal vehicle implies that he considers the tantric traditions of Mahāyoga and Dzogchen as fruitional vehicles. Keeping this understanding in mind, does gNubs chen simply follow the convention in the *lTa phreng* associating the tantric traditions with one category and the sūtric, or perhaps more accurately, non-tantric, traditions with another? Or, does he follow certain doctrinal definitions of causal and fruitional vehicles to make such a classification? If it is the former, then can we really say that his classification has done justice especially with respect to sTon mun? If it is the latter, what are his definitions?

As far as we know, Klong chen pa (1308-1364) was the first to give clear doctrinal definitions of the causal and fruitional vehicles from the Nyingma perspective. In his auto-commentary to the *Yid bzhin mdzod* (*The Precious Wish-fulfilling Treasure*), one of his "Seven Treasuries" (Tib. *mdzod bdun*) on Dzogchen, Klong chen pa states,[13]

[12] For discussions on the meanings/definitions of causal and fruitional vehicles in Tibetan traditions, see, *e.g.*, Longchen Rabjam, *The Precious Treasure of Philosophical Systems* (translated by Richard Barron), 127-260; Duckworth, *Mipam on Buddha-Nature*, 131-138; and Sobisch, *Three-Vow Theories in Tibetan Buddhism*, 367-369 and footnote 771.

[13] In the Nyingma tradition, Klong chen pa has been probably recognized as the most important codifer of its teachings. Among the two hundred and seventy some titles Klong chen pa wrote, the *mdzod bdun* or *seven treasuries* are considered his crowning achievement, and each of them presents Klong chen pa's understanding of Dzogchen teachings said to be based on his direct experience rather than on speculative thought. For a biography of Klong chen pa, see, *e.g.*, Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 109-117 and Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, Vol. I, 575-596; for a brief introduction of the *seven treasures* and his other works, see, *e.g.*, Longchen Rabjam, *Kindly Bent to Ease*

> It is called the "Causal Vehicle" because of asserting temporal causality—due to accepting that the basic element, the Buddha-nature, is merely a seed that is further developed through the conditions of the two accumulations, by which one attains Buddhahood. [In contrast,] that essential nature of Mantra exists in all sentient beings inherently and spontaneously present---complete with vast qualities.[14]

That is to say, for Klong chen pa, an approach is called a causal vehicle if it sees Buddha-nature only as a seed that needs to be further developed to its maturity, whereas an approach is a fruitional vehicle if it sees Buddha-nature to be spontaneously present and completely perfect in all sentient beings. Put in practical terms, a tradition is a causal vehicle if it advocates gradual cultivation to ripen the fruition of one's Buddhahood through the perfection of the two accumulations. On the other hand, a tradition is a fruitional vehicle if it makes the fruition of one's practice equivalent of the path.[15] Here, by taking the fruition as the path, it does not mean that the practitioner does nothing; laxity is never the answer. Rather, it implies some sort of artful endeavor, *e.g.*, one similar to the "equal learning" discussed in Shenhui's sudden teaching.

Has gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes applied the same or similar definitions of causal and fruitional vehicles as Klong chen pa's to understand Tsen, sTon, Mahā, and Ati in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*? If he has, since he puts Tsen men and sTon mun under the causal vehicle, then he must have understood both Tsen men and sTon mun to be approaches that take gradual steps to realize one's enlightenment. Yet, this understanding

Us, Part I: Mind (translated and annotated by Herbert V. Guenther), xiii-xxv and Germano, *Poetic Thought, the Intelligent Universe, and the Mystery of Self*, 10-38.

[14] Klong chen rab 'byams, *Padma dkar po*, 1169.4-1170.1; quoted in Duckworth, *Mipam on Buddha-Nature*, 131.

[15] In his *Grub mtha' mdzod* (*The Precious Treasure of Philosophical Systems*), another work among his "Seven Treasuries," Klong chen pa characterizes the fruitional vehicle as "making one's fruition same as the path" (*'bras bu rang dang 'dra ba lam du byed pas*); Klong chen rab 'byams, *Grub mtha' mdzod*, 135b.6. For a translation of the *Grub mtha' mdzod*, see Longchen Rabjam, *The Precious Treasure of Philosophical Systems* (translated by Richard Barron). The discussion on the frutitional vehicle can be seen in Longchen Rabjam, *The Precious Treasure of Philosophical Systems* (translated by Richard Barron), 239-260.

clearly contradicts his characterization of sTon mun as an approach that directly aims at "the summit of Mt. Meru so that one sees all."[16] So how do we resolve this contradiction? Should we conclude that, in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, gNubs chen's definitions of causal and fruitional vehicles are different from those of Klong chen pa? In that case, what are his definitions? Are they simply defined along the line that divides tantric traditions from non-tantric traditions? But, even in that case, what is the doctrinal basis to say that tantric traditions are fruitional vehicles? Isn't that also leading us back to Klong chen pa's definitions, in which a fruitional vehicle takes the fruition as the path?

Under the conditions that gNubs chen was aware of how the *lTa phreng* classifies the two categories and Klong chen pa's definitions have been universally accepted by the Nyingma School, I am inclined to believe that there must exist similar definitions in the mind of gNubs chen when he applies the two categories of causal and fruitional vehicles in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*. Given that, how do we then construe his characterization of sTon mun as *a causal vehicle* that is based on the sūtras of definitive meaning? Is sTon mun really a causal vehicle? If what I have presented earlier regarding the suddenness of the Chan traditions in general and of Shenhui's teachings in particular is valid, then their suddenness exhibits the quality of Klong chen pa's fruitional vehicle. Consequently, one naturally comes to ask: What about the suddenness of sTon mun? Does it also exhibit such fruitional quality that has been missed, or neglected, by gNubs chen, perhaps, due to a certain fixed notion[17] of what he thinks as sūtric (but, in fact, non-tantric) traditions? Let us keep these questions in mind as we explore in-depth the teachings of sTon mun, a causal vehicle derived from the sūtras of definitive meaning in the eyes of gNubs chen

[16] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 118.4-6.
[17] That is, all sūtric or non-tantric traditions are causal vehicles.

Sangs rgyas ye shes.

B. Suddenness: A Direct Access to the Unborn Ultimate

In the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes opens his chapter on sTon mun with the following words:

> As for the Simultaneists of sTon mun, they ascertain their view in the manner of the following example: if one [directly][18] goes to the summit of a very high mountain, one sees all. That is to say, they accept that, in the nature itself, object and subject are unborn from the beginning, and that this principle itself cannot be sought[19] by any means whatsoever. If one sees this meaning, one goes [directly][18] to the summit of Mt. Meru, the king of mountains. [In that case,] even if not viewing [from] the small mountains,[20] it is held that the understanding is vividly clear.[21]

Accordingly, in juxtaposing sTon mun with the other three approaches, he uses the following words to represent sTon mun.

> The Simultaneists of sTon mun, from the beginning, train [themselves] instantaneously and simultaneously[22] in the unborn ultimate itself without alternation.[23]

[18] Even though the original does not have this qualifier, I add it based on gNubs chen's understanding (quoted next) that the Simultaneists of sTon mun, ***from the beginning***, train themselves ***instantaneously and simultaneously*** in the unborn ultimate itself without alternation. It is becase when one equates the "summit" in the analogy as the "unborn ultimate," one then obtains that the statement that the Simultaneists of sTon mun from the beginning train themselves instantaneously and simultaneously in the unborn ultimate, metaphorically, can be re-stated as that the Simultaneists of sTon mun from the beginning go ***directly*** to the summit of the king of mountains.

[19] The original has *ma stsal ba*, but I have interpreted it as *ma rtsol ba*, which means to make effort.

[20] The original reads *ri bran*. Probably, it is an old spelling of *ri phran*, which means small mountains.

[21] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 118.4-5; ston mun cig car 'jug pa yang/ dper ri rgyal rtse mor phyin na kun mthong ba'i tshul gyis lta ba'i thag bcad pa yang/ gzhal bya dang 'jal byed gdod nas ma skyes pa'i chos nyid du/ don nyid cir yang ma stsal ba nyid kyi go bar 'dod de/ don de mthong na ri'i rgyal po ri rab kyi rtser phyin na/ ri bran ma bltas gsal ba bzhin go bar bzhed do. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 104.

[22] Due to its multiple meanings, I have often interpreted *cig car* with the variations of the two terms, instantaneous and simultaneous, together to cover its both qualities; for a discussion of the Tibetan term *cig car*, see Stein, "Illumination subite on saisie simultanée, not sur la terminologie chinoise et tibétaine" or "Sudden Illumination or Simultaneous Comprehension: Remarks on Chinese and Tibetan Terminology" in Peter N. Gregory's edited volume, *Sudden and Gradual: Approaches to Enlightenment in Chinese Thought.*

[23] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *gSam gtan mig sgron*, 57.1; ston mun ni cig car 'jug pa ste/ dang po nas re mos pa med par don dam pa ma skyes pa nyid la cig car slob te.

When combining the above two passages, we can see that, for gNubs chen, the suddenness of sTon mun is to go directly to the summit of the highest mountain; put in doctrinal terms, it is to instantaneously and simultaneously access (Tib. *cig car 'jug pa*) the unborn nature itself (Tib. *chos nyid*), the ultimate truth (Tib. *don dam pa*). This direct access that is also instantaneous and simultaneous is carried out without making the awareness of the two truths alternating. However, below we will see that, for gNubs chen, this direct access without alternation is eventually a oneness or monism, for it only regards the ultimate as the truth. gNubs chen criticizes this (mis)understanding as separating conventionality from ultimacy and thus missing the nonduality of the two truths. In this way, the suddenness of sTon mun without alternation ironically ends up in a conceptual alternation that conceptually separates in actuality what isn't separate. But I am getting ahead of myself. Now let me first elaborate further on how gNubs chen understands this direct access of sTon mun.

After likening the instantaneous and simultaneous access of sTon mun to the direct ascension to the summit of the highest mountain, gNubs chen further points out three characteristics regarding the general teaching or view of sTon mun; he states,

> [First,] it is ascertained as that which is free from all actions (the intrinsic essence of the view) but has no extremes. [Secondly,] it is ascertained as that which takes the one ultimate truth as the nonduality (the essence of that ultimate truth). [Thirdly,] it is ascertained as that which subsumes everything in the principle, thus not hoping for the fruition.[24]

Put simply, the above three characteristics of sTon mun can be summarized as actionlessness, ultimacy, and pervasiveness, respectively. When taken only as the salient

[24] Ibid, 119.1-2; bya ba thams cad dang bral ba (lta ba rang gin go bo) la mtha' med par thag bcad pa dang/ gnyis su med par (don dam de'i ngo bo) don dam par gcig par thag bcad pa dang/ don der thams cad 'dus pas 'bras bu la re thag med par thag bcad pa'o.

qualities of the final fruition, these three characteristics are not exclusively derived from a vehicle of suddenness or simultaneity, for these qualities can also be realized through a gradualist approach.[25] Nevertheless, when the three characteristics are also understood as the characteristics of the path, then they become the unique characteristics for a vehicle of suddenness. That, I belive, is the reason why gNubs chen uses them to characterizes the vehicle of sTon mun.

In addition, to understand and realize the above three characteristics, gNubs chen notes, not only do the Simultaneists of sTon mun consider spiritual teachers (Tib. *bla ma*) and sūtras of definitive meaning (Tib. *nges pa'i mdo*) indispensable, but they also rely on the realized sayings (Tib. *rig pa*) of their masters and the authoritative scriptures (Tib. *lung*) they receive. Thus, citing teachings from numerous *shen she*s[26] (or Dhyāna/Chan masters) and scriptural sources, gNubs chen presents his understanding of sTon mun in terms of its view, meditation, conduct, and fruition, and concludes his presentation with sTon mun's ten superior differences over Tsen men. He then closes with cautious words regarding the confusion that his contemporary practitioners had mistaken sTon mun to be the same as Dzogchen.[27]

[25] For example, the three characteristics can also be said of the direct cognition of *śūnyatā* or emptiness. Yet, a gradualist approach can also lead one to such a direct cognition.

[26] The Tibetan term *shen she*s is a transliteration of the Chinese term *chan-shi* 禪師 which literally means Dhyāna/Chan master.

[27] In the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, these four sections of view, meditation, conduct, and fruition for sTon mun are roughly divided as follows: view (119.2-144.1), meditation (144.1-171.6), conduct (171.6-177.1), and fruition (177.1-186.4). For an outline of the contents of the sTon mun chapter, see Otokawa, "*Zenjō tōmyō ron* kenkyū 2: Dai 5 shō (tonmonpa shō) no kōsei 『禅定灯明論』研究 (2)：第5章（頓門派章)の構成 (A Study of the *bSam gtan mig sgron* (2)--On the Structure of the Fifth Chapter (sTon mun cig 'jug pa))." In summary: (1) For gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, the view of sTon mun asserts the one ultimate reality that is separate from the conventional reality. Thus, the two truths are alternating. Sangs rgyas ye shes vehemently criticizes sTon mun to miss the true meaning of nonduality, not to mention the meaning of spontaneous presence or perfection. (2) The sTon mun meditation is to directly enter or access the unborn ultimate. It is done through the meditative practice of viewing the mind so that it reaches the state of no-thought. However, for gNubs chen, this direct access of the unborn ultimate via no-thought leans one-sidedly to emptiness or non-appearance. In that way, he characterizes sTon mun to be an approach or a

To expound the view of sTon mun, gNubs chen first quotes Bodhidarmotara's (*i.e.*, Bodhidharma) teaching of *liru* 理入 (or "entering [the ultimate] via its principle") from a Tibetan translation of the Chinese Chan treatise, the *Erru sixing lun* 二入四行論 (*The Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Practices*), attributed to Bodhidharma.[28] There, the simultaneous access of sTon mun is taught as follows:

> If one turns to the direction of the True, abandons conceptualiztion, and abides in [its] luminosity, there is neither self nor others; the ordinary and the noble are one and the same. If one abides [in it] steadily without change, from then on one does not pursue after the words and doctrinal teachings. This is to rest in the naturalness of the true meaning, which is without conceptualization, peaceful and without action. This is [called] entering the [true/ultimate] meaning.[29]

vehicle that realizes the non-appearance non-conceptuality (Tib. *mi snang ba mi rtog pa*). Also, gNubs chen understands the sTon mun *samādhi* to be only the imperturbable state of unborn emptiness that lacks the luminosity (Tib. *gsal*) resulted from the nonduality of great skillful means (Tib. *thabs chen*) and self-awareness (Tib. *rang rig*). (3) For gNubs chen, the conduct of sTon mun can be summarized in the Bodhidharma's four practices (Ch. *sixing* 四行) or four conducts (Tib. *spyod pa bzhi*): (i) the practice or conduct of the retribution of enmity (Ch. *baoyuan xing* 報冤行; Tib. *'khon la lan ldon pa'i spyod pa*), (ii) the practice or conduct of adapting to conditional arising (Ch. *suiyuan xing* 隨緣行; Tib. *rkyen gyi rjes su spyod pa*), (iii) the practice or conduct of non-seeking for anything whatsoever (Ch. *wusuoqiu xing* 無所求行; Tib. *ci yang tshol ba med pa'i spyod pa*), and (iv) the practice or conduct of being in accordance with the dharma (Ch. *chengfa xing* 稱法行; Tib. *chos dang mthun pa'i spyod pa*). He likens these practices to the actions of a fox, which signifies the criticism that sTon mun does not have the quality of a lion that is what a Buddha would do after he rises from meditation. (4) The fruition of sTon mun practice, for gNubs chen, depends on the duration of their practice; the longer one practices the better fruition one realizes. Ultimately, for him, sTon mun strives to realize the state of complete illumination (Tib. *kun tu 'od*), the 11th ground. But, in gNubs chen's view, it is still a provisional stage in comparison to the awareness-holder of spontaneous perfection (Tib. *lhun gyis rdzogs pa'i rig 'dzin*) and its enlightened deeds are thus performed via the strength of aspirations instead of the blessings of spontaneous perfection. See also Shen, "Xizangwen wenxian zhong de Heshang Moheyan ji qi jiaofa: Yige chuangzao chulai de chuantong," 22-25.

[28] According to the studies of Japanese scholars, the *Erru sixing lun chang juanzi* 二入四行論長卷子 (*An Extended Book of the Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Practices*) was probably translated into Tibetan under the name of *rGya lun chen po* (*The Great Chinese Treatise*) or *bSam gtan rgya lun chen po* (*The Great Chinese Treatise on Dhyāna*) that has been cited many times in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*; for details, see Okimoto, "Chibetto yaku *ninyu shigyo ron* nit suite." In the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes quotes the teaching of *liru* (or entering the Way via its principle) twice; see gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 57.6-58.2 and 130.2-4.

[29] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 57.6-58.2; yang dag pa la phyogs zhing rtog* pa spangs te/ lham mer gnas na/ bdag kyang med gshan yang med/ ma rabs dang 'phags pa mnyam shing gcig ste/ mi 'gyur bar brtan par gnas na/ de phan chad yi ge dang bstan pa'i rjes su mi 'brang ngo/ 'di ni yang dag pa'i don gyi rnal du phab pa rnam par rtog pa med pa/ zhi** zhing bya ba med pa ste/ de ni don la 'jug*** pa'o"; * the original has *rtogs pa*, but from the context (and its Chinese original), it should be

To understand the simultaneous access of the above Bodhidharma's *liru* teaching, one must read it with gNubs chen's above three defining characteristics of sTon mun in mind. These characteristics, as argued above, are not just the qualities of the fruition but also the guiding principles for the path. Thus, even though it is similar to other Buddhist schools like the Madhyamaka, the *liru* teaching depicts the ultimate as transcending dualistic separation and characterizes the nature of the true meaning, another name for the ultimate, as non-conceptual, serene, and actionless. Its path however is unlike the gradualist model of the Madhyamaka. Rather, as the literal meaning of *liru* suggests, it is to directly enter the ultimate via its principle. So, the simultaneous access of the *liru* actually asks its practitioners to take the qualities of the ultimate as the ways for them to directly access the ultimate. Accordingly, the practitioners of the *liru*, the Simultaneists of sTon mun, from the very beginning, turn to "the direction of the True," and when doing so, they firmly abide in its "luminosity" (*i.e.*, qualities) without any wavering. Since the salient qualities of the ultimate include non-conceptuality, actionlessness, and pervasiveness, the Simultaneists thus instantaneously[30] abide in the ultimate not only without any wavering but also with the contemplative principles of non-conceptuality, actionlessness, and pervasiveness.

Put in contemplative terms, the principle of actionlessness essentially asks the Simultaneists to be free from all action (Tib. *bya ba*) or effort (Tib. *rtsol ba*) when abiding in the ultimate, for one who seeks earnestly (Tib. *don du gnyer ba*) for the unborn

rtog pa; ** the original has *zhing*, but from the context (and its Chinese original), it has been changed to *zhi*; *** the original reads *mi 'jug*, but from the context (and its Chinese original), it does not make any sense to have the negation. Thus, the negation *mi* has been taken out of the final translation. For these modifications, see also another version of the Tibetan translation in footnote 53 (under (3) Bodhidharma) below.

[30] This quality of instantaneity is not only derived from the above gNubs chen's general characterization of sTon mun but also obtained from the statement that the Simultaneists, **from the very beginning, firmly abide** in the luminosity of the True. That is to say, I interpret "a firm abidance from the very beginning" as "an instantaneous abidance."

ultimate will only corrupt one's own mind.[31] Yet, this effortless abidance is never a call for laxity, as gNubs chen clearly states in his characterization that the actionlessness of sTon mun "has no extremes" such as quietism or nihilism. Instead, for sTon mun, this effortless abidance is a kind of artful endeavor, an instantaneous and simultaneous learning (Tib. *slob*), that is also guided by the principles of non-conceptuality and pervasiveness. Thus, we also see, gNubs chen unequivocally states that the Simultaneists insist on accessing the ultimate, the nature of all dharma, with the practice of non-thinking (Tib. *ma bsams*). Here, the mindfulness of non-thinking, for sTon mun, is the mindfulness of the Buddha which pervades all phenomena without beginning or ending. With this beginningless (and endless) awareness, the Simultaneists directly and effortlessly "rest in the naturalness of the true meaning," the reality of the *dharmatā*.[32]

Nonetheless, it seems that even though the ultimate of sTon mun is characterized as

[31] It is said in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, "For sTon mun, all *dharmas* [*i.e.*, phenomena] of self and others are unborn from the beginning, yet one who seeks earnestly for that unborn-ness will corrupt the mind. As a result, one will never see the great meaning, just as the strength of a grey duck does not stir up the ocean. **However, if one does not think anything whatsoever, that is said to enter the nature of the dharma.** (Emphasis added; ston mun ni bdag gzhan chos so cog ye nas ma skyes pa la/ de ma skyes pa don du gnyer ba ni sems bslad pa ste/ des nam kyang don chen po mi mthong ste/ dper na bya gag gi rtsal gyis rgya mtsho mi 'khrugs pa dang 'dra'o/ 'on tang cir yang ma bsams na chos nyid la zhugs par 'dod de; gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 61.3-4)." Here, my interpretation is different from that of Dalton and van Schaik (see their "Lighting the Lamp: An Examination of the Structure of the Bsam gtan mig sgron," 172). Their translation reads, "For the *ston mun* all phenomena of self and others are unborn from the beginning, and yet in striving for the ultimate to be born, their minds are corrupted. Therefore they never see the great meaning, just as the paddlings of a grey duck do not stir up the ocean. Even when they do not think at all, they still desire to enter the *dharmatā*." I find their translation difficult to understand on two parts. First, I don't know how they translate "de ma skyes pa don du gnyer ba ni sems bslad pa ste" to "yet in striving for the ultimate to be born, their minds are corrupted" as there is no "ultimate" in the original Tibetan" and "ma skyes pa" means "unborn" or "unbornness." Thus, I have translated the sentence to be "one who seeks earnestly for that unborn-ness will corrupt the mind," which indicates that even though sTon mun aims at the unborn, they do not seek for it earnestly. Rather, they seek for it in the manner of non-thinking or no-thought that is exactly the message in the last line of the cited paragraph and that is also the another place where I differ from Dalton and van Schaik. Therein, somehow they read "'on tang cir yang ma bsams na chos nyid la zhugs par 'dod de" to be "Even when they do not think at all, they still desire to enter the *dharmatā*." This interpretation does not recognize the main practice of sTon mun to be non-thinking or no-thought (Tib. *ma bsams* or *mi bsam*); for sTon mun, one who is in the state of *ma bsams* or non-thinking has entered the *dharmatā*. As a result, I have translated the sentence to be "However, if one does not think anything whatsoever, that is said to enter the nature of the dharma."

[32] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 58.3-6.

pervasive, gNubs chen still understands it, most probably in the framework of the two truths, to be leaning to the side of *śūnyatā* or emptiness (Ch. *kongxing* 空性; Tib. *stong pa nyid*). Consequently, gNubs chen characterizes the fruition of sTon mun as entering the non-conceptuality of non-appearance (Tib. *mi snang ba mi rtog pa*). Perhaps, this characterization of gNubs chen's is not without a basis since, in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, one can find various masters of sTon mun positively emphasizing the empty or unborn nature of all phenomena when teaching the ultimate. For instance, Dhyāna Master Kha (Ch. Yuan chanshi 淵禪師; Tib. bSam gtan gyi mkhan po Kha shan shi) teaches,

> If one knows that everything is completely empty [in nature], that which knows and that which is known are empty, and the wisdom of being able to know is also empty. Therefore, dharma and wisdom all are empty. Thus, this is the *śūnyatā* or emptiness of being empty.[33]

All in all, be it pervasive or non-appearing, the ultimate is what the Simultaneists of sTon mun aims at directly, like the summit of the highest mountain. So, on account of the scriptures and masters' realized sayings, gNubs chen concludes his assessment of sTon mun as follows. That is, for sTon mun, the ultimate is unborn, yet it is also the reality itself. Here, the uniqueness of sTon mun does not lie in how this unborn ultimate is characterized, since most of other Buddhist schools have similar understandings. What is uniquely sTon mun here is that the characteristics of the ultimate reality are also the characteristics of the path. Thus, even though the ultimate cannot be sought, it is however embraced or accessed directly by the practitioners with its own salient qualities. These qualities include non-conceptuality, actionlessness, and pervasiveness, which further lead to other "negative paths" of sTon mun such as non-action (Ch. *wuzuo* 無作; Tib. *bya ba*

[33] Ibid, 122.4-6; gal te chos so cog yun du stong par shes na shes pa dang shes pa'i stong par shes par nus pa'i ye shes kyang stong pa ste/ de bas na chos dang ye shes kun kyang stong pa yin pas/ de ni stong pa nyid kyang stong pa yin no.

dang bral ba), non-thinking or no-thought (Ch. *wunian* 無念; Tib. *bsam pa med pa*, *mi bsam*, *mi sems*, or *mi dran*), non-grasping or non-reification (Ch. *wusuode* 無所得; Tib. *dmigs su med pa*), non-abidance (Ch. *wuzhu* 無住; Tib. *gnas med pa*), and so forth. In all these "negative paths" of sTon mun, the commonality is the direct access to the unborn ultimate. For gNubs chen, that is how the Simultaneists cultivate themselves, and that is the suddenness or simultaneous access of sTon mun.

C. Oneness: A Mistaken Understanding

For gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, even though the sudden approach of sTon mun is superior to the gradual approach of Tsen men, the sTon mun view is still defective because it misses the point of nonduality or inseparability of the two truths. This mistake of sTon mun, in the eyes of gNubs chen, results from the Simultaneists' exclusive focus on the ultimate thus neglecting the conventional. Therefore, even when they speak of nonduality, the Simultaneists subsume everything under the ultimate and thus take "the one ultimate truth as the nonduality." In this way, (although it rightly recognizes the actionlessness of the unborn ultimate), the suddenness of sTon mun is not a nonduality but a oneness (Tib. *gcig pa*) in essence. Thus, gNubs chen writes,

> Even though the [Simultaneists of] sTon mun aspire for non-action, they do not understand nonduality (so they are surpassed by Mahāyoga). Even if they (sTon mun) speak of nonduality, their view, in which all is the ultimate truth, empty and unborn, is asserted to be a oneness.[34]

Furthermore, gNubs chen critiques sTon mun from the vantage point of Mahāyoga

[34] Ibid, 62.2-3; de lta bu'i ston mun bya ba dang bral bar gsol ba yang/ gnyis med par ma shes so [ma haas brgal ba]/ gal te gnyis med par smra ba yang [ston mun]/ ril don dam pa'i bden pa stong pa ma skyes par lta ba der gcig par 'dod de.

and argues that the sTon mun oneness, which has the Simultaneists aim at the unborn ultimate itself without alternation (Tib. *re mos* or *res 'jog*), in effect, not only blinds themselves to see the inseparability of the two truths but also divides the two truths in a way, in which only the unborn ultimate is considered to be true but the born conventional is regarded to be untrue. However, this division between the two truths is only conceptually possible, for the ultimate and the conventional are always inseparable in reality. As a result, for gNubs chen, the suddenness of sTon mun that leaves no room for the born conventional ironically ends up in a conceptual alternation, with which the Simultaneists prevent themselves from seeing the nondual and inseparable reality epitomized in the teachings of Mahāyoga, not to mention the spontaneous presence (Tib. *lhun gyis grub pa* or *lhun grub*) of *dharmadhātu* or the basic space of phenomena (Tib. *chos dbying*) that uniquely characterizes the teachings of Dzogchen. In the words of gNubs chen, this incomplete view of sTon mun is described as follows.

> Furthermore, they [the Simultaneists of sTon mun], who are endowed with the [conceptual] alternation (that is, the unborn [ultimate] being true and the born [conventional] being untrue), do not see the inseparability that is the true essence of the Mahāyoga. Thus, they are blinded by their own view, just as the ones who collect the millet seeds (*i.e.*, the crop) do not see the earth, or the ones who thread a needle, even though looking upward, do not see the sky.[35]

To make the quoted passage truly a critique from the Mahāyoga perspective fitting to gNubs chen's *bSam gtan mig sgron* context, I made two changes to its Tibetan original.

[35] Ibid, 62.3-5; 'on tang res 'jog can [skye med ni bden pa/ skye ba* ni mi bden pa'o] des rnal 'byor chen po'i rang bzhin bden par dbyer med pa ma** mthong ste/ rang gi lta bas sgribs so/ de na dper na khre''bru ['bras] thu bas sa gzhi mi mthong ba dang/ khab mig 'jug pa g.yen du lta yang nam mkha' mi mthong ba dang 'dra'o. * The original has *skye med*, but according to the meaning of the context, Lama Thadrel, my Tibetan commentator, has suggested to change *skye med* to *skye ba*, which makes more sense. ** The original does not have the negative particle *ma*, but according to the meaning of the context, Lama Thadrel has suggested to add *ma* so as to make gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's assessment of sTon mun as derived from the perspective of Mahāyoga. See also the reasons given in the main text.

It is worthwhile noting them here, for they highlight the philosophical issues essential to gNubs chen's understanding of the conceptual mistake in the sudden teaching of sTon mun. The first one is pertaining to the idea of alternation. In the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, gNubs chen makes it clear (see below) that alternation (Tib. *re mos*) and inseparability (Tib. *dbyer med*) are contrasting ideas. As inseparability is undoubtedly pertaining to the two truths, alternation should therefore be similar as well. This is the main reason why I changed the Tibetan original, "the **unborn** [ultimate] being true and the **unborn** [ultimate] being untrue" to "the **unborn** [ultimate] being true and the **born** [conventional] being untrue." This change underscores the epistemological mistake gNubs chen is concerned about in the sTon mun suddenness. For gNubs chen (especially from the perspective of the higher vehicles such as Mahāyoga and Dzogchen), the unborn ultimate and the born conventional are inseparable in reality; that is, both are true. Thus, when the sudden teaching of sTon mun puts all the emphasis on the ultimate, not only does it neglect the conventional (thus creating a oneness view), but more importantly it creates a conceptual alternation in one's awareness of the two truths, which conceptually separates what isn't separate in actuality and erroneously prevents one from seeing the reality of inseparable presence of the two truths.

Given the above rationale for the first change, the second change follows naturally, for it simply points out that it is those possessing a conceptual alternation regarding the two truths who "**do not see** the inseparability that is the true essence of the Mahāyoga," rather than, what the Titbetan original says, they "**see** the inseparability … ." This change completely fits to gNubs chen's metaphorical criticism that follows. That is to say, for gNubs chen, the Simultaneists of sTon mun, due to their insistence on the direct access to

the ultimate thus creating the said conceptual alternation, blind themselves to see the inseparability by their own view. Thus, they are like the ones who collect "the millet seeds" (*i.e.*, sTon mun's direct access to the ultimate) but do not see "the earth" (*i.e.*, Mahāyoga's nondual inseparability and Dzogchen's spontaneous presence), or the ones who, looking up to thread a needle, do not see the sky. Clearly, for gNubs chen, the Simultaneists of sTon mun are doing something right, but because of their insistence on the unborn ultimate, they eventually miss "the sky" of the inseparable and spontaneously present reality as it is.[36]

To further validate my above interpretation and understand gNubs chen's idea of how the Simultaneists of sTon mun miss the point of nonduality or inseparability, let me bring our attention to how he juxtaposes Mahāyoga with sTon mun and Tsen men based on gNyen dPal dbyangs's (c. early 9th century) teachings.

> If someone asks whether this [Mahāyoga] system is alternating or inseparable, it has no alternation that is similar to Tsen [men] and sTon [mun]. While self-awareness, as the ultimate truth, is imperturbable from the state that is free from extremes, the self-awareness and [its] appearance as the deity are similar to the ocean and [its] waves. The mere appearance [of the deity], like the moon in the water, is without essence, but is inseparable [with the self-awareness] in the three times. Thus, at the time when meditating the deity on the path, one who has high acumen [understands] the inseparability of the two truths. To perform development and dissolution alternatively is [only] temporarily for the practitioners of

[36] My above interpretation of the quoted passage is different from that of Dalton and van Schaik (see their "Lighting the Lamp: An Examination of the Structure of the Bsam gtan mig sgron," 172). Particularly, they interpret the *res 'jog* or alternation to be a characteristic of the Mahāyoga. However, this interpretaion can be refuted not only with gNubs chen's own words cited next in my main text but also with my rationale discussed in the main text. To contrast, Dalton and van Schaik's translation reads, "(1) Furthermore, those [the Mahāyogins] who alternate {between the unborn being true and the unborn being untrue} see inseparability as the true nature of Mahāyoga. (2) Yet they are obscured by their own view, just as one who picks the millet seeds {the crop} does not see the earth, or one who threads a needle does not see the sky even though looking upwards." Individually, sentences (1) and (2) are permissible, but when connecting the two, it makes the interpretation fallible, as the criticism of "they are obscured by their own view" clearly aims at the Simultaneists of sTon mun who fixate themselves at the unborn ultimate and thus are obscured by their own view.

beginner or inferior, and it is not the perfect teaching.[37]

From this quoted passage, several points are worth noting. First, as mentioned earlier, alternation is made in contrast to inseparability, thus implying both are in relation to the two truths. Secondly, for gNubs chen, both Tsen men and sTon mun teachings essentially make their followers' awarenesses of the two truths alternating, whereas Mahāyoga, relying on the teaching of reflexive awareness or self-awareness (Tib. *rang rig*), leads its practitioners not only understand the inseparability of the two truths but also realizes that this inseparability is similar to how the ocean is inseparable from its waves. Doctrinally, in the system of Mahāyoga, gNubs chen explains, self-awareness is like the ocean (or the moon) which gives rise to the "waves" (or the moon in the water) of appearance (Tib. *snang ba*). In contemplative terms, this appearance is shown as the deity (Tib. *lha*) in the practitioner's development stage (Tib. *bskyed rim*) of visualization meditation. In this Mahāyoga meditation, gNubs chen cautiously advises, the alternating practice of developing and dissolving (Tib. *bskyed bsdud*) the deity image is only a temporary stage that should not be taken as the fruition. Thus, with the quoted passage, gNubs chen distinctly conveys the message that the Mahāyoga practitioners understand the inseparability of the two truths and thus practice accordingly, whereas both Tsen men and sTon mun do not understand such inseparability and their practices are therefore imperfect and meant only for those of weaker or dull capacity just as the temporary approach of developing and dissolving the deity image in the system of Mahāyoga.

[37] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 208.3-5; 'o na de re mos pa'am dbyer med pa yin no zhe na/ 'dir tsen ston ltar re mos pa med de/ don dam par rang rig pa mtha' dang bral ba'i ngang las ma g.yos bzhin du/ rgya mtsho dang rlabs ltar rang rig lhar snang la/ snang tsam na chu zla ltar ngo bo med de dus gsum du dbyer med pas/ lam la lha bsgom pa'i dus nyid blo rab bden pa rnam gnyis dbyer med de/ re mos bskyed bsdud byed pa ni re zhig lam pa gsar bu tha shal gyi ngor ste/ gzhung rdzogs pa ni ma yin no.

Not only in relation to Mahāyoga but to Dzogchen as well, gNubs chen expresses his concern about the conceptual alternation in the system of sTon mun. Below is one of the examples illustrating how gNubs chen, while pointing out some similarities between the two traditions, criticizes the teachings of sTon mun from the Dzogchen perspective; he writes,

> The terminology of sTon mun is similar to that of Dzogchen. While, [similar to Dzogchen], it [*i.e.*, sTon mun] teaches [the practices of] non-action and non-establishment, having in mind the ground that is not arising and completely perfect, it [only] speaks of the ultimate truth as the ground that is unborn and empty. If one examines with respect to that [*i.e.*, the teachings of sTon mun], there are still [the problems of] exerting in [making one's awareness of the two] truths alternating and getting accustomed [only] to the state of *śūnyatā*. [As a result,] they [*i.e.*, the Simultaneists of sTon mun] never experience in reality the nonduality of [the two] truths. Obscured by their own [mistaken] view, they need yet to enter into nonduality.[38]

Here, we see, for gNubs chen, even though the Simultaneists of sTon mun also teach the practices of non-action (Tib. *bya ba med pa*) and non-establishment (Tib. *bsgrub pa med pa*), they derive these practices only from the understanding that the ground, the ultimate truth, is unborn and empty. This characterization of gNubs chen's implies that the Simultaneists do not realize the reality of spontaneous presence that fundamentally gives rise to the said practices in the system of Dzogchen. In addition, gNubs chen clearly states that, by focusing only on the ultimate being unborn and empty, the Simultaneists develop the problems of making one's awareness of the two truths alternating and getting accustomed only to the state of *śūnyatā*. In this way, gNubs chen concludes the

[38] Ibid, 490.3-5; ston mun ni rdzogs chen dang skad mthun/ bya ba med bsgrub pa med par ston yang/ gzhi mi 'byung ba yongs su grub pa la dgongs nas/ don dam pa'i bden pa ma skyes stong pa'i gzhi la smra ste/ de la ni brtags na da dung bden pa re mos pa dang/ stong pa'i ngang la 'dris par byed pa dang/ rtsol ba yod de/ bden pa gnyis med pa la spyod kyang ma myong ste/ rang gi lta bas bsgribs te gnyis med la bzod 'jug dgos so. See also Meinert, "Structural Analysis of the *Bsam gtan mig sgron*," 192, and Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 105.

comparison saying that, due to their own mistaken view, the Simultaneists of sTon mun never, in actuality, experience the state of nonduality (let alone the Dzogchen state of spontaneous presence).

All in all, in gNubs chen's understanding, the suddenness or simultaneous access of sTon mun that doctrinally leads to a mistaken oneness and the misunderstanding of the two inseparable truths essentially makes sTon mun inferior to higher vehicles like Mahāyoga or Dzogchen on account of twelve aspects.[39] In short, for gNubs chen, due to their misunderstanding, the Simultaneists conceptually divide the two truths and thus do not discern (Tib. *ma dpyad*) the true meaning of nondual suchness (Tib. *gnyis su med pa'i de bzhin nyid*) or spontaneous presence.[40] When developing the *bodhicitta* (Tib. *sems bskyed*), they do not develop it to the level of nondual *bodhicitta* that simultaneously embraces the great compassion of doing altruistic deeds to all sentient beings and the unborn nature of the awakened mind.[41] Their method of non-action not only leans one-sidedly to the unborn ultimate without the evenness of the nonduality,[42] but it is in fact a gradualist method (Tib. *rim gyis*) even though they claim it to be able to remove, instantaneously and simultaneously, all defilements by non-abandonment (Tib. *spang du med pa*). gNubs chen contends that, from the vantage point of natural perfection, the simultaneist approach of sTon mun is gradualist because its removal of defilements is due

[39] These twelve aspects are: (1) the development of *bodhicitta* or mind of enlightenment (Tib. *sems bskyed*), (2) the *upāya* or skillful means for realization (Tib. *rtogs pa'i thabs*), (3) right view (Tib. *lta ba*), (4) *samādhi* or deep concentration (Tib. *ting nge 'dzin*), (5) conduct (Tib. *spyod pa*), (6) the ways of making rectification (Tib. *skyon bcos*), (7) the ways of accumulations (Tib. *tshogs*), (8) the methods for removing defilements (Tib. *sgrib pa sbyong ba*), (9) how to benefit sentient beings (Tib. *'gro don spyod pa*), (10) how to enter the Way (Tib. *'jug lugs*), (11) fruition (Tib. *'bras bu*), and (12) the deeds after realizing the Buddhahood (Tib. *mdzad pa'i phrin las*). With respect to these aspects, gNubs chen's discussion can be found in gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 280.3-290.4.

[40] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 283.1-284.3.

[41] See Ibid, 281.1-282.1.

[42] See Ibid, 282.1-283.1 and 287.4-287.6.

to the "momentary power of completing a [cleansing] act" (Tib. *bya ba rdzogs pa'i skad cig tsam gyi dbang*) rather than the self-purity (Tib. *rang dag*) of one's illuminating primordial wisdom (Tib. *ye shes gsal ba*) or the natural luminosity (Tib. *rang gsal*) of one's nondual awareness (Tib. *gnyis med kyi rig pa*).[43]

In addition, for gNubs chen, the Simultaneists ultimately abide in the *samādhi* that is the imperturbable state of unborn *śūnyatā* but lacks the profound wisdom illuminating the nonduality between great *upāya*s (or skillful means; Tib. *thabs*) and self-awareness.[44] Even though the sTon mun fruition is said to be the state of complete illumination (Tib. *kun tu 'od*), gNubs chen clearly states that, in comparison to the awareness-holder of spontaneous perfection (Tib. *lhun gyis rdzogs pa'i rig 'dzin*), the sTon mun fruition of complete illumination is still a provisional stage, a resting place (Tib. *bsti gnas*) rather than the final fruition.[45] Finally, gNubs chen contends that the enlightened deeds (Tib. *phrin las* or *rgyal ba'i mdzad pa*) in the system of sTon mun are performed with great compassion only after the realization of the *samādhi* and by the strength of aspirations (Tib. *smon lam gyi shugs kyis*), which, for him, is categorically different from those performed instantaneously through the manifestations of peaceful and wrathful deities (Tib. *zhi sprul pa yis*) or through the blessings of one's innately spontaneous perfection (Tib. *lhun gyis rdzogs pa'i byin gyis rlabs*).[46] In sum, informed by the teachings of Mahāyoga and Dzogchen, gNubs chen understands sTon mun as a causal vehicle and its teaching of direct access to the unborn ultimate eventually makes its doctrinal system a mistaken oneness that obscures its view, meditation, conduct, and fruition to the effect

[43] See Ibid, 286.5-287.1; 285.4-286.1; and 286.1-286.5.
[44] See Ibid, 284.3-284.6 and 284.6-285.4.
[45] See Ibid, 287.6-289.6.
[46] See Ibid, 287.2-4 and 289.6-290.4.

that its followers cannot contemplatively realize the Mahāyoga essence of nonduality, let alone the Dzogchen perfection of spontaneous presence.

II. An Alternative Understanding of sTon mun

If my above presentation of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's reading of sTon mun is correct, one can certainly interpret his critique of the sTon mun suddenness as indicating that the idea of immediacy for contemplation, if misunderstood doctrinally or philosophically, can result in an incomplete cognition of reality at best, if not a completely distorted one. Yet, is gNubs chen's understanding the only reading of the sTon mun system? Is his understanding completely in agreement with the sTon mun teachings found in the related Dunhuang manuscripts? If there are differences, what are they and how do we construe them, particularly in relation to the two categories of causal and fruitional vehicles?

Building upon the previous studies as well as my own readings of related Dunhuang Chan/sTon mun manuscripts, both in Chinese and in Tibetan, I will present below an alternative understanding of sTon mun. But my alternative reading is not meant to prove gNubs chen's understanding mistaken. Rather, it intends, on the one hand, to reveal the various philosophical and contemplative layers embedded in the sTon mun idea of simultaneous access and, on the other hand, to illustrate the hermeneutical plasticity underlying the idea of immediacy. That is, the idea of immediacy can be interpreted with different emphases by authors or practitioners of different philosophical or contemplative orientations. Yet, due to their close connection, one cannot completely separate what is philosophical from what is contemplative or vice versa. Thus, as I discuss related issues below, I will fluidly move between the two dimensions not only to conform to the proper

context but also to recognize their import simultaneously.

A. Suddenness: A Simultaneous Access to the Mind-Source

When the simultaneous access of sTon mun is understood as a direct access to the unborn ultimate without any wavering, one may naturally wonder what the unborn ultimate really refers to in doctrinal or philosophical terms. Is it the unborn *śūnyatā*, as explained in the teachings of the Madhyamaka? Is it the *tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha-nature advocated by some Yogacāra followers? Or are there some other possibilities? Even though gNubs chen identifies the referred unborn ultimate as the ultimate truth within the two-truths framework, evidence derived from the previous studies of Dunhuang Chan manuscripts seems to suggest that the unborn ultimate to which sTon mun practitioners try to directly access is what they call the all-encompassing *xinyuan* 心源 or mind-source.[47] Yet, what is this mind-source philosophically speaking? How does it encompass all? Furthermore, why does sTon mun ask its followers to simultaneously access this mind-source and how is this simultaneous access of sTon mun implemented contemplatively? To address these questions, let us delve into the sTon mun teachings presented in the Dunhuang manuscripts for possible answers.

Recently it has been sufficiently demonstrated by several authors that the Chan idea of "tracing the luminosity back to its mind-source" (Ch. *fanzhao xinyuan* 返照心源), or simply "tracing back the luminosity" (Ch. *fanzhao* 返照),[48] is the basis for the sudden

[47] I take *xinyuan* 心源 as an appositional compound that emphasizes the "originating" property of the mind. That is, the mind is the source and the source is the mind, thus my translation, mind-source.

[48] In his study of the teachings of Chinul (1158-1210), the founder of the Korean tradition of Zen, Robert E. Buswell translates this Chinese term *fanzhao* 返照 as "tracing back the radiance"; see Buswell, *Tracing Back the Radiance*.

teaching of sTon mun.[49] This idea of "tracing back the luminosity" is plainly named as the sudden teaching of the Mahāyāna in the *Zhujing yaochao* 諸經要抄 (*An Anthology of Various Sūtras*), one of the important Dunhuang Chan anthologies that were translated into Tibetan around the 8th-9th centuries.[50] It says,

> This is the dharma gate [*i.e.*, approach] of Mahāyāna sudden teaching: Since all sentient beings originally possess Buddha-nature, the myriad sūtras and treatises, the written words and speeches of Mahāyāna and Hināyāna teachings, only point to the original nature of the sentient being, [directly] seeing which one realizes Buddhahood. This [sudden] approach is also called returning to the source, tracing back the luminosity, tracing upstream, turning back the direction, no birth, the uncontaminated, the non-arising, or the dharma that is free from seeing, hearing, perceiving, and knowing.[51]

From the quoted passage, we see clearly that the "source" to which the practitioner is asked to return is the Buddha-nature each of the sentient beings originally possesses. While the "suddenness" of the approach is not so obvious, the idea of "tracing back the luminosity" suggests that the suddenness may come from directly applying the source's "luminosity" (*i.e.*, enlightening qualities) as the guidance for one's practice. This is evidently reminiscent of how gNubs chen characterizes the approach of sTon mun discussed earlier. Then, in essence, "tracing back the luminosity" requires the practitioner to take the enlightening qualities of the source (also the final fruition, Buddha-nature) as the path, *i.e.*, as the contemplative principles for the path.

The idea of "returning to the source" is doctrinally associated not only with Buddha-nature but also with one's awakened mind. In the *Zhengli jue*, a Chinese record

[49] See *e.g.*, Obata, "Kodai chibetto ni okeru tonmonpa (zenshū) no nagare," 66-73 and Meinert, "Chinese Chan and Tibetan rDzogs-chen," 291-297.

[50] For a discussion of the Tibetan translation of the *Zhujing yaochao*, see *e.g.*, Otokawa, "New Fragments of the *rNal 'byor chen por bsgom pa'i don* from Tabo," 115-117.

[51] *Zhujing yaochao*, T. 85 (2819): 1196c; 『此大乘頓教法門，為一切眾生本來自有佛性，千經萬論、大小乘教文字言說，只指眾生本性、見成佛道。此法亦名反源、亦名反照、亦名反流、亦名迴向、亦名無生、亦名無漏、亦名不起、亦名法離見聞覺知。』

of the Council of Tibet, Moheyan is said to teach that "tracing back the luminosity" is to directly view the awakened mind in contemplation; he explains,

> Tracing the luminosity back to its mind-source is to view the mind. If the mind gives rise to a thought, being or nonbeing, purity or impurity, emptiness or non-emptiness, and so forth, all these should not be considered. Even non-examination should not be considered. Thus, in the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra*, it is said, "non-examination is Bodhi [*i.e.*, awakening]."[52]

Here, one can make the following observation. That is, the Chan/sTon mun communities in the border areas like Dunhuang basically follow the main ideas of Chan teachings in Central China. So, they identify Buddha-nature as the original nature, further associate it with the mind-source, and then instruct their followers to view directly into the nature of the mind so that its enlightening qualities can be seen and used as the guidelines for practice.

Yet, philosophically speaking, as the source, how is the mind all-encompassing and what does it mean to the sTon mun practitioners that the mind is so? In general, in the Dunhuang Chan manuscripts, sTon mun teaches that the mind, as one's True-nature (or Buddha-nature), is naturally perfect and replete with all merits without any lacking.[53]

[52] Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 25;『返照心源看心，心想若動，有無、淨不淨、空不空等，盡皆不思，不觀者亦不思，故淨名經中說:「不觀是菩提。」』 This passage has also been translated into Tibetan and preserved in Dunhuang manuscript PT 823. For comparison, the Tibetan translation is given as follows: "It is to turn back the six sense doors and then look into the mind. If concepts stir, one does not consider whether they exist or not, whether they are pure or not, whether they are empty or not, etc., and one does not consider even one's state of non-examination and non-consideration. In the *Vimalakīrti* it is also said: 'Non-examination is awakening.' (sgo drug bzlogs ste/ slar sems la blta ste/ 'du shes g.yos na/ yod pa dang myed pa dang gtsang pa dang myi gtsang pa dang/ stong pa dang myi stong pa la stsogs pa cir yang myi bsams/ myi rtog myi bsam par yang myi bsams ste/byi ma kir ti'i nang nas kyang/ myi rtog pa ni byang chub ces 'byung'o; PT 823, 1.4-2.2)"; the English translation of the Tibetan passage is taken from Gómez, "The Direct and the Gradual Approaches of Zen Master Mahayana," 126. Also, see Meinert, "Chinese Chan and Tibetan rDzogs-chen," 293-294.

[53] Among the Dunhuang Chan/sTon mun Chinese and Tibetan manuscripts, for example, (1) the *Zhujing yaochao* teaches, "This very real dharma gate [*i.e.*, approach] is that all sentient beings [possess] the pure mind of self-nature that is called the wisdom of the [great] complete mirror. Up from the Buddhas and down to the sentient beings, [their respective pure mind of self-nature] is completely equivalent; there is nothing to add or subtract. It is only due to the cover of ignorant, delusory thoughts that its dharma essence

The only problem sentient beings or mundane people have is that they let delusory "dusts" or thoughts cover this True-nature so that its natural luminosity (Tib. *lham me* or *rnal du*), wherein there is neither self nor others and the ordinary and the noble are one

is not able to manifest. (『此真實法門，是一切眾生自性清淨心，名為[大]圓鏡智。上從諸佛、下至眾生，悉皆同等、無有增減。但為無明妄想所覆，令其法體不得顯現。』 *Zhujing yaochao*, T. 85 (2819): 1193c)." Interestingly, this teaching is said to be taught by Jingangzhi 金剛智 or Vajrabodhi (671?-741), a Buddhist tantric master who came to China to teach tantric Buddhism in the Tang Dynasty. (2) Moheyan is said to teach, "Just detach oneself from conceptual thoughts, delusory thoughts. Then, [dharmas such as] the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment will naturally be fulfilled, and all merits will also be completely equipped. (『但離心想妄想，即三十七道品，自然具足，一切功德，亦皆圓備。』 Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 25)"; he also teaches, "If the delusory mind does not arise and one detaches oneself from all delusory thoughts, the originally existent true nature and all-knowing wisdom will naturally manifest. (『若妄心不起，離一切妄想者，真性本有，及一切種智，自然顯現。』 Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 28)"; (3) Bodhidharma is said to teach in his teaching of *liru* (entering the Way via its principle or entering the ultimate meaning), "Regarding entering the [ultimate] meaning, the scriptures are understood by means of the teachings, and ordinary beings and the true nature are one and not different. However, because it is obscured by the adventious dusts of untruth, the true nature is not directly realized. If one abandons the untruth, turns to the direction of the true, abandons conceptualiztion, and abides in [its] luminosity, there is neither self nor others; the ordinary and the noble are one and the same. If one abides [in it] steadily without change, from then on one does not pursue after the words and doctrinal teachings. Now one has come to rest in the naturalness of the true, which is without conceptualization, peaceful and without action. That is entering the [ultimate] meaning. (don la 'jug pa ni bstan(d) pas gzhung go ba ste/ so so'i skye bo dang/ yang dag pa'i ngo bo nyid gcig cing/ tha myi dad pa yin na/ myi bden pa'i glo bur gyi srdul gyis bsgribs pas/ yang dag pa'i ngo bo nyid mngon bar ma rtogs so/ gal te myi bden pa spangs te/ yang dag pa la phyogs shing/ rtog pa spangs te/ lham mer gnas na/ bdag kyang myed/ gzhan yang myed/ ma rabs dang 'phags pa yang mnyam zhing gcig ste/ myi 'gyur bar brtan bar gnas na/ de phan cad yi ge dag bstan pa'i rjes su myi 'brang ngo/ da ni yang dag pa'i rnal du bab pa/ rnam par rtog pa myed pa/ zhi zhing bya pa myed pa ste/ de ni don la 'jug pa'o; PT 116, 164.3-165.4; this teaching of Bodhidharma's *liru* apparently was well-known among the Tibetan Buddhists, for it has also been quoted twice by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in his *bSam gtan mig sgron*; see the discussion under Section I.B and footnotes 28 and 29 above)"; (4) mKhan po Bu cu (or Chan master Wuzhu 無住禪師) also teaches the primordial perfection of all sentient beings: "All sentient beings are primordially pure and primordially perfect. Therefore, [with respect to their nature,] there is neither increase nor decrease. [However,] because they follow after [their] thinking, in the three realms, [their] afflictive minds take (or incarnate in) all kinds of aggregate bodies. When seeing one's [true] nature through [the guidance of] a spiritual teacher, one realizes Buddhahood. If one is attached to phenomenal characteristics, one sinks in transmigration. Because sentient beings have thoughts, the designation of no-thought [as a provisional method] is taught. When thoughts are absent, then even no-thought should not be added [*i.e.*, should be let go]. Regarding the mind of the three realms, one should not reside in the place of complete tranquility, should not abide in phenomenal characteristics, nor should perform any karmic action, but should be free of illusion. That is the complete liberation. (sems can thams cad ni/ thog ma nas rnam par dag/ thog ma nas yosu rdzogs pas/ bsnan du yang myed/ dbrir yang myed/ bsam ba'i rje su gzhol bas/ khams gsum du sems zag pas/ phung po'i lus sna tshogs blangs te/ dge ba'i bshes nyen la bltos/ rang bzhin mthong na sangs rgyasu 'grub bo/ mtshan ma la chags na 'khor/ sems can bsam ba yod pas/ bla dags su bsam ba myed par bshad de/ bsam ba myed na bsam ba myed pa 'ang myi gzhag go/ khams gsum gyi sems ni/ bdag zhi ba'i sa la yang myi gnas/ mtshan ma la yang myi gnas/ las myi byed pa 'ang ma yin te/ sgyu ma dang bral ba ni rnam par grol ba'o; PT 116, 188.3-189.4)"; and (5) mKhan po Shin ho (or Master Shinho) also has similar teachings; see the quotations referred to in footnotes 81, 82, and 83 below.

and the same, cannot spontaneously manifest itself.[54] Thus, given this philosophical understanding that the mind-source is naturally perfect and complete without any lacking, sTon mun adamantly insists that, as long as one realizes the emptiness or empty nature of delusory thoughts and let one's spontaneous self-awareness (Ch. *ziran zhi* 自然知; Tib. *rang gis rig pa*) or fundamental wisdom or original awareness (Ch. *genben zhi* 根本智; Tib. *phyi mo'i ye shes*) manifest in suchness, one is then self-liberated (Ch. *zixing jietuo* 自性解脫; Tib. *rang grol*) as a Buddha.[55] Accordingly, sTon mun asks its followers to neither grasp nor relinquish but simply embrace all appearances with the wise discernment or wisdom of nondual non-conceptuality (Ch. *wuer wufenbie zhi* 無二無分別智). Moheyan explains this teaching as follows.

> All Buddhas and Tathāgatas, since countless eons ago, have been free of three poisons, delusory thoughts and afflictive conceptualizations. Therefore, they have realized the nondual, non-conceptual wisdom. With the nondual, non-conceptual wisdom, they wisely discern the appearances of all phenomena, rather than conceptualize them with ignorant, delusory thoughts. Based on this understanding, *prajñā* and *upāya* are not separate. Regarding grasping and relinquishing, how can there be any grasping or relinquishing in nonduality?[56]

Thus, with the idea of embracing all, sTon mun understands the "ultimate meaning"

[54] Moheyan has repeated quoted the *Vajracchedikā-sūtra* and other Mahāyāna sūtras to assert his audience, "When absent of all delusory thoughts and habitual tendencies, one is then called a Buddha. (『離一切妄想習氣，則名諸佛。』 Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 20)" and "All sentient beings, due to having delusory thoughts and conceptual discrimination, attach themselves to the delusory thoughts of arising and non-arising. Therefore, they wander in the cycle of life and death [*i.e.*, saṃsāra]. If they do not attach themselves to the delusory thoughts of arising and non-arising, they will then attain liberation. (『一切眾生，緣有妄想分別，取著生不生妄想，是故流浪生死。若能不取著生不生妄想，便得解脫。』 Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 25)"; see also the related teachings by other Chan/sTon mun masters such as Bodhidharma, Wuzhu, and Shenhui discussed in the previous footnote.

[55] For details, see the discussion on Master Shinho's teachings (*i.e.*, the quotations referred to in footnotes 81, 82, and 83) below.

[56] Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 33;『諸佛如來無量劫已來，離三毒、妄想、煩惱分別，是故悟得無二無分別智。以此無二無分別智，善能分別諸法相，非是愚癡妄想分別。據此道理，智慧方便不相離。若言取捨，於無二法中，有何取捨?』

(Ch. *shengyi* 勝義; Tib. *don dam pa*)[57] not simply as non-action or non-cultivation, but as that which is beyond the duality of action or non-action (Ch. *xing buxing* 行不行), or cultivation or non-cultivation (Ch. *xiu buxiu* 修不修).[58] Yet, while the sTon mun idea of ultimacy transcends all dualistic categories such as being and nonbeing, purity and impurity, emptiness and non-emptiness, and so forth,[59] its transcendence is also inclusive. Specifically, the transcendence is achieved by embracing all categories, including dualistic categories, with the non-conceptual equalness of the mind-source.

In fact, it is most conspicuously with the non-conceptuality of the mind-source that sTon mun associates its all-embracive or all-encompassing doctrine. This can be clearly seen in the Dunhuang Chan manuscripts. For example, in the *dMyigs su myed pa tshul gcig pa'i gzhung* (*A Treatise on the One Principle of Non-Reification*) of PT 116, the author(s) cites from various sūtras to expound how Mahāyāna non-conceptuality (Tib. *theg pa chen po rnam par myi rtog pa*) embraces (Tib. *'dus pa*) *bodhicitta*, *pāramitās*, *upāyas* or conventional truth (Tib. *kun rdzob*), ultimate truth (Tib. *don dam pa*), middle way (Tib. *dbu ma*), nonduality (Tib. *gnyis su med pa*), outer and inner awarenesses, self-awareness (Tib. *rang gis rig pa*), all-knowing wisdom, the enlightened activities of the Buddha, and so forth.[60] This all-encompassing understanding of the sTon mun non-conceptuality is distinctively not in agreement with gNubs chen's characterization of

[57] Even though the sTon mun idea of *shengyi* has been translated as *don dam pa* or the ultimate meaning or truth, it is not in its usual sense as that in the framework of the two truths. Rather, it is all-encompassing; for a more detailed analysis, see my discussion below. To be sure, if one fails to recognize this subtle difference, one would reach the conclusion that direct access to the unborn ultimate which sTon mun propounds reduces everything to the one ultimate reality, as gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes has done in his *bSam gtan mig sgron*.

[58] See *e.g.*, Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 39.

[59] That is to say, the ultimacu of sTon mun is not just pertaining to purity or emptiness, which is usually the case in the traditional two-truths framework. See below for a more detailed discussion.

[60] See *e.g.*, PT 116, 146.2-163.4; for an English translation, see Faber, "A Tibetan Dunhuang Treatise on Simultaneous Enlightenment," 63-70.

the sTon mun non-conceptuality as non-appearance that leans one-sidedly to nonbeing or emptiness.[61]

At this point, based on gNubs chen's non-appearance characterization, a skeptic may ask, "If the Simultaneists indeed advocate the all-encompassing mind-source as the unborn ultimate, why do they so heavily emphasize 'negative' ideas such as non-action (Ch. *wuzuo* 無作; Tib. *bya ba dang bral ba*), no-thought (Ch. *wunian* 無念; Tib. *bsam pa med pa*, *mi bsam*, *mi sems*, or *mi dran*), non-examination (Ch. *buguan* 不觀; Tib. *mi rtog pa*), non-grasping or non-reification (Ch. *wusuode* 無所得; Tib. *dmigs su med pa*), non-abidance (Ch. *wuzhu* 無住; Tib. *gnas med pa*) or no-locus (Ch. *wusuo* 無所; Tib. *myed pa'i gnas*)?" A Simultaneist may respond that these so-called *via negativa* or "negative paths," contemplatively speaking, are not meant to negate or exclude something like actions or thoughts. Rather, these "negative paths" are to contemplatively lead the practitioner to directly bring forth the qualities or characteristics of the mind-source, to which these "negative paths" correspond. For example, the practice of "non-action" does not mean to simply do nothing. But it is to directly bring forth the state of non-action or effortlessness that is a defining characteristic of the mind-source.[62] In this way, the so-called "negative paths" are not "negative" in the sense of negating or

[61] In fact, in the Dunhuang Tibetan manuscript of ITJ 709 discussed in the previous chapter, there is a passage warning against the grasping or reification of non-being; it is said, "Those who have objective grasping or reification, while being completely under control, are in darkness that covers their own supreme wisdom. Therefore, even though the small [afflictions?] have been completely cleansed, that is still the conceptualization of non-being. Other practices or stages are [still] needed to clean it. (… dmyigs pa can de dag/ mngon du khugs su zin kyang/ rang gi mchog gi ye shes la sgrib pa'i mun par 'gyur bas/ chung du yongs su byang du zin kyang/ de ma yin ba'i rtog pa/ gzhan rims kyis sbyang dgos pas; ITJ 709/9, 38v.1-3.)"

[62] Similarly, the practice of "no-thought" does not mean to remove conceptual thoughts through the act of purification or ceasing. Rather, it removes them by directly bringing forth the state of no-thought, a defining characteristic of the mind-source. In the same fashion, all other "negative paths" are meant to bring forth their corresponding qualities so as to reveal the mind-source.

excluding something. Rather, they show the practitioner to positively embrace all phenomena or activities with the mind in the manner of their corresponding properties such as effortlessness, non-conceptuality, or non-reification.

Given this contemplative understanding that the "negative paths" in the system of sTon mun are to manifest the all-encompassing mind-source, the sTon mun idea of *shengyi* or ultimacy must thus be understood philosophically as all-encompassing, for ultimacy is the goal these "negative paths" are devised to achieve. This philosophical understanding effectively gives rise to an ultimacy of wholeness (discussed more below) that encompasses all, ultimate and conventional. Here, for sTon mun, if one's realization still retains any conceptualization of the categories of ultimacy and conventionality, that realization is not ultimate and still has faults. Thus, when asked, "Is it or is it not necessary to practice the six *pāramitās* and other dharma gates [i.e., approaches]?", Moheyan responds,

> In the manner of the conventional truth, six *pāramitās*, and so forth, are *upāyas* to reveal the ultimate truth; they are not unnecessary. With respect to the ultimate truth, it is beyond speech and thought. [Thus,] six *pāramitās* and other dharma gates are not said to be necessary or unnecessary. This has been extensively explained in the sūtras.[63]

Put simply, the above passage really signifies that for the Simultaneists of sTon mun, conventionality comprises skillful means, whereas ultimacy comprises skillful means performed ultimately. In other words, ultimacy is conventionality actualized as such without conceptual superimposition whatsoever. After all, ultimacy bears no conceptual frameworks. Even nonduality or emptiness, under this realization, should be given no

[63] Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 26; 『如世諦法，六波羅蜜等，為方便、顯勝義故，非是不要。如勝義離言說，六波羅蜜及諸法門，不可說言要與不要，諸經廣說。』

designation, for all things should be just as such and the wisdom of suchness embraces the entirety of all that exists.[64]

Furthermore, as they are the practices to manifest the all-encompassing mind-source, the "negative paths" are actually the "cure-all medicine." This is because, as one directly manifests the all-encompassing mind-source, one also brings forth one's innately all-knowing wisdom (Skt. *sarvathājñāna*; Ch. 一切種智; Tib. *thams cad mkhyen pa nyid*) that helps him or her to see all things as they are. This is like the sun emerging from the clouds, illuminating every corner of the world, or a mirror, innately luminous, reflecting the objects in front of it without any discrimination.[65] In its original nature, the mind is just as it is, nothing to add or subtract; it is spontaneously complete and perfect. As one manifests one's original nature, one thus self-liberates oneself.[66] So, in the final analysis, the "negativity" of the "negative paths" is not an act to "break" the darkness of ignorance,

[64] So, Moheyan is said to teach, "Thus, the dharma is just as such. The wisdom of suchness embraces all the teachings of the Buddha. (『是故法如如，如如之智，攝一切佛法。』 Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 20-21)"; mKhan po Yen also explains, "The very place that is seen by the eyes is the limit of reality. All dharmas are the limit of reality. Other than that what else to seek for? (mig gis mthong ba'i gnas nyid bden pa'i mtha' yin te/ chos so cog kyang bden pa'i mtha' yin no/ de las gshan du btsal du ci yod; gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 123.2-3)".

[65] See, *e.g.*, Moheyan teaches, "If the delusory mind does not arise and one detaches oneself from all delusory thoughts, the originally existent true nature and all-knowing wisdom will naturally manifest. It is like what the *sūtras* of the *Āvataṃsaka*, the *Laṅkāvatāra*, and so for have said: 'Like the Sun comes out of the clouds, muddy waters become clear, a mirror reveals its brightness; like the silver is taken out from its ore, and so forth.' (『若妄心不起，離一切妄想者，真性本有，及一切種智，自然顯現。如花嚴及楞伽等經云:「如日出雲，濁水澄清，鏡得明淨，如銀離礦等。」』 Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 28)"; the *bSam gtan gi yi ge* (in the Dunhuang manuscript ITJ 709) alos has the following, "Even the children, who are fully immersed in the *dhyāna* of the Tathāgata, will not have mind, thought, and consciousness, but abide in the benefits of noble supreme wisdom and self-discriminating awareness. Thus, neither establishing the cause nor wishing for the fruition, this itself is the activity of becoming the intrinsic Buddha. As a result, one will not fall down to the other realms of Śravākas, Non-Buddhists, and so forth. (de bzhin gshegs pa'i bsam gtan gi rjes su 'jug pa'i sras rnams kyang/ sems dang yid dang/ yid kyi rnam par shes pa la ma yin gyi/ mchog gi ye shes 'phags pa/ so so rang gis rig pa'i bed ba la gnas pas/ rgyu las myi sgrub/ 'bras bur myi re mod kyi/ de nyid chos nyid kyi sangs rgyas su 'gyur ba'i las yin te/ de las nyan thos dang/ mu stegs can las stsogs pa'i sa gzhan du myi ltung ngo; ITJ 709/9, 37v.3-38r.1)." See also the teachings of Shenhui's discussed in Section II.C below.

[66] Chan/sTon mun masters teach that the dharmas neither bind nor liberate the dharmas; as such, they are in the state of self-liberation (Ch. *zixing jietuo* 自性解脫; Tib. *rang grol thar pa*); for similar teachings, see, *e.g.*, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 124.4-125.1 and 125.2.

but a realization to let the innate brightness of the mind-source shine naturally without any obscuration. In this way, the "negative paths" are the contemplative implementation for the Simultaneists of sTon mun to trace the "luminosity" back to its mind-source, and should not be read as something affirming gNubs chen's characterization, in which the Simultaneists lean one-sidedly to the nonbeing or empty nature of the non-conceptuality.

Clearly, my above interpretation of the sTon mun unborn ultimate is very different from that of gNubs chen's understanding presented in Section I of this chapter. Therein, gNubs chen understands the unborn ultimate as the ultimate truth in the traditional two-truths framework. Consequently, he interprets the suddenness of sTon mun as an approach that only emphasizes the non-appearance aspect of the non-conceptuality and is essentially a vehicle of oneness utterly misconstruing the nonduality or inseparability of the two truths. Perhaps that is not without reason, for the mind-source is referred to as the "ultimate meaning" by the Simultaneists themselves, and its Tibetan translation, *don dam pa*, certainly warrants gNubs chen to read it in the framework of the two truths. Yet, in spite of this ambiguous reference, evidence shows that gNubs chen may be familiar with the sTon mun use of the "ultimate meaning" as the all-encompassing mind-source demonstrated above.[67]

While we cannot ascertain the exact reason why gNubs chen chose to read sTon mun in the way he did, there is however the possibility, especially from the contemplative perspective underscored in this dissertation, to understand gNubs chen's reading of sTon mun as his genuine warning to all practitioners, not just sTon mun practitioners. In the message, gNubs chen informs us that when contemplatively applying the teachings or

[67] In his *bSam gtan mig sgron*, gNubs chen is familiar with, *e.g.*, Bodhidharma's reference of the True-nature (*i.e.*, Buddha-nature) as the ultimate, and he also refers to the materials in the Dunhuang manuscript PT 116 which indicate that the sTon mun non-conceptuality is all-encompassing.

instructions of directly accessing the unborn ultimate, there is the possibility of falling into a doctrinal oneness, a mistaken understanding of nonduality that needs to be avoided. This reading, I believe, not only offers us a perspective going beyond the usual polemical rendering taken for this kind of scenario; such rendering usually collapses the meaning of the exchange. But it also enriches the conversation between gNubs chen's reading and my alternative interpretation by providing a context for further reflections into philosophical as well as contemplative issues associated with the idea of immediacy. Above I have shown that when the unborn ultimate is understood as the all-encompassing mind-source with all its philosophical nuances, not only could gNubs chen's criticism of sTon mun be mended, but it further brings us insights into the teachings of sTon mun such as the contemplative significance underlying the approaches of "negative paths." Below let us journey further into this philosophically and contemplatively rich field to explore related ideas such as nonduality based on my above rendering of the sTon mun suddenness or simultaneity.

B. Nonduality: Oneness or Wholeness?

To be sure, for gNubs chen, even if the Simultaneists speak of nonduality, their idea of nonduality is in actuality a oneness because he considers the fundamental philosophy of sTon mun to be "all is the ultimate truth, empty and unborn." However, given my rendering of the sTon mun suddenness as a simultaneous access to the all-encompassing mind-source, I would argue that a better way to characterize the fundamental philosophy or view of sTon mun is that, for sTon mun, "the ultimate is all-encompassing and beyond

designation."[68] The subtle difference between the two characterizations gives rise to two interpretations, in which the former is a oneness (or monism), whereas the latter can be called a wholeness that simultaneously embraces the two truths.

In the oneness characterization, as one considers that all is the ultimate truth, unborn and empty, all appearances in their phenomenal arising and ceasing thus become illusory untruth in conception. As a result, there is a conceptual alternation in one's awareness of the conventional being untrue and the ultimate being true. This conceptual alternation consequently not only creates a nonexistent separation, but also disrupts the nonduality or inseparability, between the conventional and the ultimate. Hence, the statement that all is the ultimate truth effectively leaves no room to the conventional. Thus, gNubs chen is correct to characterize it as a oneness and identify it as a mistaken understanding which all practitioners should properly avoid.

On the other hand, in what I call the wholeness characterization (*i.e.*, the ultimate is all-encompassing and beyond designation), there exists a different dynamic between the ultimate and the conventional. Namely, they are inclusive or more precisely interfusing of each other.[69] In this interfusing dynamic, not only are the two truths interconnected, unlike how they are conceptually separated in the above oneness characterization, but they are also inseparable in a specific way. That is, the conventional is the *upāya* or

[68] Even though I still use "the ultimate" here in this characterization, it is not "the ultimate" in the framework of the traditional two truths. Rather, I am emphasizing that what has to be understood depends on its context. The ultimate, under the contextualization of the all-encompassing mind-source, is also all-encompassing, whereas the ultimate, under the contextualization of the traditional two-truths paradigm, is complementary to the conventional. To be more specific, the ultimate, within the contextualization of the all-encompassing mind-source, embraces both the ultimate and the conventional in the contextualization of the traditional two-truths paradigm.

[69] For various relationships between the conventional and ultimate truths, see *e.g.*, Gregory, *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism*, 103-104; Swanson, *Foundations of T'ien-T'ai Philosophy*, especially 18-37; Newland, *The Two Truths in the Mādhyamika Philosophy of the Ge-luk-ba Order of Tibetan Buddhism*, especially 59-75; and Thakchoe, *The Two Truths Debate*, especially 7-44.

skillful means taught to facilitate the realization of the ultimate, whereas the ultimate is the nondual principle (Ch. *wuer fa* 無二法) or *prajñā* governing the conventional *upāya* so that the *upāya* is actualized without any dualistic designation that may strengthen even an iota of conceptual or mental superimposition.[70] As a result, any conventional *upāya* does not stay on the conventional level anymore, for it is "interfused" with the ultimate *prajñā* and thus is free of any conventionality, or more precisely, conceptualization. This "*prajñā*-interfused" *upāya* is then called a valid *upāya* in the sTon mun sense. In this way, the two truths are said to embrace each other to the extent that they are "neither one nor distinct" (Ch. *buyi buyi* 不一不異).[71] They interfuse each other to form a wholeness that characterizes their inseparability as well as nonduality.

The interfused wholeness of conventional *upāya* and ultimate *prajñā*, for sTon mun, philosophically, needs to be distinguished from a doctrinal oneness, for the conventional *upāya* and the ultimate *prajñā*, even though their designations are essentially eliminated, are neither one nor distinct. They are paradoxically nondual, interfusing or permeating each other without collapsing each other.[72] Contemplatively, the interfused wholeness, it seems, inspires the Simultaneists to cultivate themselves with everything but grasp

[70] When discussing the teachings of Moheyan, Gómez also writes, "If the distinction between means and wisdom, relative and absolute, error and truth, is the pristine error, then it follows that the goal must be a state of freedom from these dualities, rather than any strengthening of the mental habits that they presuppose"; see Gómez, "The Direct and the Gradual Approaches of Zen Master Mahayana," 99.

[71] Regarding this nondual principle, Master Moheyan is said to teach, " The conventional and ultimate truths are neither one nor distinct [*e.g.*, two or many]. Why are they not one? It is because [sentient beings still have delusory thoughts, due to which they reify the conventional truth. What are they not distinct? When they are free of all delusory thoughts and habitual tendencies, one and many (or sameness and distinctness) should not be conceptualized or discriminated. (『[世間及第一義諦]不一不異。云何不一? 妄想未盡，已來見有世諦。云何不異? 離一切妄想習氣時，一異不可分別。』 Wang, *Dunwu dasheng zhengli jue*, 26)".

[72] In the Tibetan translation of the *Yaojue*, a Chan/sTon mun treatise briefly discussed in the previous chapter, the Tibetan interpretation of the sTon mun nonduality is given as follows: "As both one and many, it is called nonduality"; mying gcig du na gnyis su myed ces kyang bya'o (PT 116, 200.2); see Ueyama, "Chibettoyaku *Tongo shinshū yōketsu* no kenkyū," 73-74; 82; and 97.

nothing. So, in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, gNubs chen gives several quotations that include

> When the eye sees all the forms, the eye should not acquire [*i.e.*, reify] the forms. Similarly, all the six senses should follow [the same principle]. Therefore, from the sūtra, it is said, 'If one does not reify anything whatsoever, [one will then receive] the prophecy of the Buddha [for enlightenment].' Also, all dharmas should not be reified, and the non-reification itself should not be reified, either.[73]

Accordingly, the Simultaneists interact with all the conventional phenomena, but interact with them ultimately, *i.e.*, in the manner of non-reification or non-grasping-and-non-relinquishing. This contemplative practice of sTon mun, in effect, is a simultaneous access to, or a simultaneous embrace of, the two truths, attempting to realize the nondual inseparability of the ultimate *prajñā* and the conventional *upāya* in their no-designation state.

Understanding the simultaneous embrace of the two truths as a strategy to pass beyond the oppositions that what he calls the Chan "twofold truth" has set up, Bernard Faure cites Derrida to argue that not only is the claim to pass beyond the oppositions "bound to fall short of its goal," but its failure is as much due to its marked one-sidedness as due to the ideological or metaphysical asymmetry between the two levels of truth.[74] There, Faure further concludes,

> [T]he attempt, however, to maintain the viability of both sides of the opposition equally, to be simultaneously on both sides of the divide or to grasp simultaneously the two truths, may reflect a will to mastery that keeps falling back on one side and turning into another rhetorical effect. Perhaps there is no way out of this predicament, and

[73] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 123.1-2; mig gis gzugs so cog mthong na/ mig gis gzugs so cog thob par mi rung/ tshogs drug char ded pa 'dra bas/ mdo sde las/ ci yang thob pa med pa ni/ sangs rgyas kyi lung ston to/ yang chos so cog thob par mi rung ba nyid kyang thob par mi rung ngo.
[74] For his detailed argument, see Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 59.

this is the true paradox of the twofold truth.[75]

To the above philosophical predicament, a contemplative response may be possible for, if the simultaneous embrace is to contemplatively eliminate the divide and inform us that there are actually no sides but an interconnected whole, then these are no oppositions to pass and no sides to fall back. After all, oppositions and sides are simply results of conventional and conceptual reification, which can be contemplatively dissolved. Thus, what the simultaneous embrace of the two truths really tries to inform us about is that the conventional cannot be true on its own; it must be suffused with the ultimate so that its dualistic and conceptual falsity can be rectified. On the other hand, the ultimate is only a kind of conceptual abstraction if it is not in association with the physical relativity of the conventional; after all, there is no *śūnyatā* that is not the *śūnyatā* of some phenomenon. Understood in this way, the simultaneous embrace of the two truths would not be marked with one-sidedness, nor would it signify any ideological or metaphysical asymmetry between the two levels of truth. Rather, it is an effective means to experience the reality of wholeness that sTon mun tries to elaborate. In the experience, the two truths must be co-nascent and interfused to the extent that all designations or reifications must be dissolved, even the designations of the conventional, the ultimate, or the wholeness themselves.

Regarding the interfusion of the two truths, Faure raises another valid concern stating, "What was in Indian Mahāyāna a nonduality became in Chinese Mahāyāna an identity, or at least an interpenetration."[76] This interpenetration, Faure claims, has led Chan (and our sTon mun too) "to reinterpret in a unilateral way the Mādhyamika notion

[75] Ibid.
[76] Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 57-58.

of Two Truths and to assert [one-sidedly] the ultimate reality."[77] This one-sided assertion is problematic because it may inevitably lead Chan/sTon mun followers to an abstraction that ignores the "density, depth, the plurality of planes, [and] the background worlds"[78] in reality. Ironically, this insightful criticism of Faure's, I argue, signifies exactly what Chan or sTon mun means to counter through the contemplative practice of simultaneous access to the wholeness of the two truths. The crucial point, perhaps, is that, for sTon mun, the nonduality of the Madhyamaka is philosophically sound but contemplatively insufficient, for its gradualist model of realization, while facilitating the contemplative to establish conceptual apprehension, inevitably leaves a small trace of dualistic residue that strengthens unwanted mental habits of conceptualization and, as a result, prevents the contemplative from directly experiencing the two truths in their nondual state.

Accordingly, sTon mun advocates the practice of direct or simultaneous access to the wholeness of the two truths, which, as shown above, does not collapse the two but makes them a whole with interfusion. This interfusion is soteriologically necessary for it breaks the divide that reifies the two truths as conceptual categories and creates mental superimposition to prevent the contemplative from experiencing reality as it is. As the contemplative interfuses the two truths into a wholeness, he or she also realizes that the wholeness is self-pregnant with indefinite possibilities, for it is the open field devoid of any conceptual framework or limitation. With its indefinite possibilities, not only is this wholeness not a oneness that collapses everything into an ideological or metaphysical abstraction (such as the undifferentiated ultimate reality or the Godhead), but it is actually filled with "density, depth, the plurality of planes, [and] the background worlds."

[77] Ibid, 58.
[78] Ibid.

The indefiniteness of the said wholeness can be further exemplified in the sTon mun practices of "negative paths." As discussed earlier, the "negative paths" are not meant to negate or exclude something but to reveal the mind-source with their corresponding properties. A close look at these properties can reveal that they all exhibit a kind of "openness" or "indefiniteness." For example, "non-action" does not mean no actions but all actions that are accomplished in the manner of neither-grasping-nor-relinguishing; "no-thought" does not mean no thoughts at all but the awareness spontaneously arising from one's mind-source; "no-locus" does not mean no dwelling but the dwelling in what is called the state of one-wholeness (Ch. *yihexiang* 一合相; Tib. *gzugs gcig du*) that combines many into one, on the one hand, and is both one and many, on the other.[79] After all, a method of indefiniteness is to realize something similar. With this rationale, the indefiniteness of the "negative paths" essentially testifies to the indefiniteness of the wholeness under investigation. Otherwise, if the wholeness is definite and thus finite, how can it then encompass the infinite-all?

In doctrinal terms, the indefiniteness of the sTon mun wholeness can be also understood as the non-abidance of the all-encompassing mind-source. In the Dunhuang Tibetan manuscript PT 116, mKhan po Shin ho (or Master Shinho)[80] characterizes the mind as follows.

> Realize the defining characteristic of the truth that has no thinking or

[79] Literally, the Chinese term *yihexiang* 一合相 (or one-wholeness) can be glossed as "the form that combines many into one." Its Tibetan translation *gzugs gcig du* has the literal meaning of "the form that is both one and many." Both suggest that one-wholeness is both singular and plural. Even though it challenges our Cartesian logic and common sense, perhaps, it is its purpose to ask us to break the usual logic boundaries so that we can access the non-logic contemplatively and thus bring the two (*i.e.*, one and many) together. For the teaching of one-wholeness in the *Yaojue*, see Ueyama, "Chibettoyaku *Tongo shinshū yōketsu* no kenkyū," 73-74; 82; and 97.

[80] Both Obata Hironobu and Okimoto Katsumi identify mKhan po Shin ho as Chan master Shenhui, whose teachings have been studied in Chapter 2 of this dissertation; see Obata, "Pelliot 116 bunken ni mieru shozenji no kenkyū" and Okimoto, "bSam yas no shūron (2): Tonkō seizō bunken ni okeru sho zenshi."

> thoughts at all times. If one asks what that is, [it is] the primordial self-nature of the mind, the state of non-abidance itself, that should not be reified. The mind is pure, and it is not a referential object of a *samādhi*. Regarding the mind, [there is no reification concerning] its being, nonbeing, wholesomeness, or unwholesomeness, nor is there reification concerning its colors or shapes. Regarding the mind, there is also no reification concerning it having limits or not having limits, being measurable or not being measurable, being localized or not being localized. All the phenomenal characteristics of mental actions should not be reified.[81]

Being indefinite, the mind cannot be categorized in any way and thereby is not reifiable. This characteristic is not only the self-nature of the mind but also the state of non-abidance. Being the self-nature, this state of non-abidance, Master Shinho further explains, is the spontaneous self-awareness (Tib. *rang gis rig pa*) of the mind discerning everything as it is without any stopping (*i.e.*, bondage), just as a bird flies without stopping in the air. In Master Shinho's words, we have,

> Thus, as the mind is non-abiding, the equalness of the mind is primordially non-abiding too. That is the spontaneous self-awareness. The so-called "awareness" is to come to the place or state of non-abidance. For example, a bird flies without stopping in the empty space. If it [stops and] resides in the empty space, it will fall. For that reason, non-awareness is not proper. If there is no awareness, it will fall from the empty sky. Consequently, non-abidance, primordially, is the state of ultimate rest itself, and through [one's] fundamental wisdom, it is possible [for one] to know the difficult state of ultimate rest itself.[82]

Evidently, for the Simultaneists like Master Shinho, the state of non-abidance is not

[81] PT 116, 183.4-184.4; rtag du dran ba myed pa'i bden ba'i mtshan ma bsgrub bo/ de yang gang zhe na/ sems kyi rang bzhin ye nas myi gnas pa'i ngo bo nyid ni/ thob par bya ba myed de sems dang ba dang/ ting nge 'dzin du dmyigs pa myido/ sems la yin pa dang/ ma yin ba dang/ bzang ba dang/ ngan pa dang/ sems la kha dog dang dbyibs su yang dmyigs pa myed/ sems la mtha' yod pa dang/ mtha' myed pa dang/ tshad yod pa dang/ tshad myed pa dang/ gnas yod pa dang/ gnas myed pa 'ang dmyigs pa myed de/ yid la bya ba'i mtshan ma thams cad myi dmyigs so.

[82] PT 116, 184.4-185.4; de ltar sems la gnas myed par gyur na/ sems kyi mnyam ba'i ngo bo nyid yi nas myi gnas pa de ni/ rang gis rig pa yin no/rig pa zhes bya ba ni myi gnas pa'i gnas su phyin pa'o/ dper na bya ni bar snang nam ka la myi gnas par 'gro ste/ gal te nam ka bar snang la gnas par gyur na ni lhung bar 'gyur ro/ de'i phyir rig pa myed pa yang ma yin no/ rig pa myed na stong pa'i mthar lhung ngo/ de bas na myi gnas pa ni ye nas zhi ba'i ngo bo nyid de/ phyi mo'i ye shes kyis na zhi ba dka' ba'i ngo bo nyid rig par nus so.

restlessness. On the contrary, it is the state of ultimate rest itself (Tib. *zhi ba'i ngo bo nyid*), for non-abidance is the self-nature of the mind. In other words, as long as one acts in accord with the nature of the mind, one rests ultimately, for one never burdens the mind by acting against its nature. To fully realize this paradoxical (thus difficult) state, as Shinho instructs, one finds recourse in one's "fundamental wisdom" (Tib. *phyi mo'i ye shes*), a sTon mun equivalent of the spontaneous self-awareness. In the manifestation or direct perception (Tib. *mngon sum*) of one's spontaneous self-awareness, one knows and sees all, but without the duslistic actions of knowing and seeing, for one acts in complete accord not only with the nature of the mind or *dharmakāya* (Tib. *chos kyi sku*) but also with the nature of all phenomena or *dharmadhātu* (Tib. *chos kyi dbying*). In this way, as one realizes non-abidance, one perfects and completes all myriad qualities. Regarding this understanding, Master Shinho expounds,

> Even if one knows with direct perception, there is the non-action of the mind as a knower. Even if one sees with direct perception, there is the non-action of the mind as a seer. That is the *dharmakāya* of complete perfection and equivalent with the empty space in accord with the *dharmadhātu* [or the sphere of dharmas]. Because the essential nature is non-abiding, its immeasurable qualities are spontaneously perfected and completed.[83]

Consequently, both philosophically and contemplatively, the above Shinho's teaching regarding the state of non-abidance is significant in terms of understanding the nature of the sTon mun wholeness, for it tells us that as one realizes the state of non-abidance, one realizes all. Philosophically, for the state of non-abidance to cover the entirety, it must be indefinite; as it is indefinite, it embraces the infinite-all that is the

[83] PT 116, 185.4-186.2; ... mngon sum du shes na yang/ shes par yid la bya ba myed/ mngon sum du mthong na yang/ mthong bar yid la bya ba myed pa de ni yongs su rdzogs pa'i chos kyi sku ste/ chos kyi dbying dang/ 'thun bas nam ka dang mnyam ste/ ngo bo nyid gyis myi gnas pas/ yon tan dpag du myed pas lhun kyis rdzog par 'gyur ro.

wholeness. Given this philosophical understanding, the contemplative effectiveness of the "negative paths" like non-abidance really comes from realizing the "indefinite" (or "non-abiding") nature of the mind-source; they are not meant to negate but to embrace the indefiniteness that, according to Shinho, is the manifestation of one's spontaneous self-awareness. In this way, indefiniteness also implies spontaneous presence or embrace, for what is indefinite can only be embraced spontaneously or without any condition. In this spontaneous or unconditional embrace, one embraces the whole, the immeasurable, just as it is.

In the above presentation, we see that, based on my alternative understanding of the unborn ultimate as the all-encompassing mind-source, the sTon mun view of the two truths can be epitomized in a wholeness that simultaneously embraces the two. This simultaneous embrace of the two truths informs us not only how the Simultaneists philosophically understand the inseparability and nonduality of the two truths, but also how they contemplatively realize the nondual inseparability of the two truths. In both the understanding as well as the practice, the two truths interfuse each other to the effect that the conventional is engaged in the manner of ultimacy, whereas the ultimate is embodied in conventional appearances. With this interfusing dynamic, the wholeness paradoxically is both singular and plural, for the two truths are "interfusedly" inseparable yet without being collapsed into one (thus they are nondual). In this wholeness that warrants the principle of nonduality, there also exist infinite possibilities that give rise to variety or plurality endowed with density, depth, and extensiveness. This indefiniteness, as argued, is philosophically and contemplatively associated with the "negative paths" of sTon mun. Exemplified through the idea of non-abidance, we see that what supports these "negative

paths" to tally with the said indefiniteness is one's spontaneous self-awareness. In these ways, the wholeness under investigation not only embodies the principle of nonduality but also exhibits the logic of spontaneity.

Along with gNubs chen's oneness understanding, the above wholeness rendering evidently demonstrates some of the various philosophical and contemplative layers underlying the sTon mun idea of simultaneity in particular and the idea of immediacy in general. So, we see, the contemplative idea of simultaneous access can be, on the one hand, interpreted as derived from a philosophy of oneness that misses the nonduality of the conventional and the ultimate and collapses everything into an ideological abstraction. Yet, on the other and, it can also be read as derived from a philosophy of wholeness that not only simultaneously embraces the two truths but also exhibits the principles of nonduality and spontaneity. Furthermore, contemplatively speaking, in addition to what we learn from Shenhui's sudden Chan, in which the logic of immediacy in contemplation must integrate gradualness in the context of suddenness so that the logic of immediacy can be contemplatively implemented, the above wholeness rendering of the sTon mun simultaneity adds to our knowledge that the logic of immediacy in contemplation asks its practitioner to engage conventional phenomena, but the engagement must be done in the manner of ultimacy so that the practitioner artfully fulfills the logic of immediacy in contemplation without falling into the bondage or deviation of conventionality.

C. sTon mun: A Fruitional Vehicle Within the Sūtric Traditions

In spite of the fact that gNubs chen classifies sTon mun as a causal vehicle,[84] he

[84] As I suggested above, it is reasonable to assume that in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* gNubs chen's classification of sTon mun as a causal vehicle is a result of following the convention in Padmasambhava's

also clearly characterizes the simultaneous access of sTon mun as a way to directly access the unborn ultimate without any wavering. This direct access, as I have shown above, exhibits the property of Klong chen pa's definition of the fruitional vehicle that takes the characteristics of the fruition directly as the path, *i.e.*, as the contemplative principles for the path. However, according to gNubs chen's exegesis, such a logic of immediacy (*i.e.*, direct application of the characteristics of the fruition) in contemplation can be flawed if it is based on a doctrinal oneness that creates a conceptual separation between the ultimate and the conventional. Given this understanding, insofar as the idea of immediacy is a defining characteristic of the fruitional vehicle, it is not everything the fruitional vehicle is all about, for it, if misconstrued philosophically, can result in an incomplete cognition of reality and conceptually separate what isn't separate in actuality. Such a rendering can be the deeper message behind gNubs chen's classification of sTon mun as a causal vehicle. Yet, without contrary evidence we cannot rule out the possibility that he follows the convention in Padmasambhava's *lTa phreng* to put all sūtric traditions in the category of the causal vehicle, as many, if not all, later Tibetan commentators have done.

However, my alternative interpretation of the sTon mun simultaneity strongly suggests that sTon mun is a fruitional vehicle embedded within the sūtric traditions, for its direct access is to simultaneously access the all-encompassing mind-source. This direct access is understood as a wholeness that embraces the two truths simultaneously in

lTa phreng, which associates the tantric traditions with the fruitional vehicle and the non-tantric (or sūtric) traditions with the causal vehicle. This assumption is plausible especially given the fact that gNubs chen was familiar with Padmasambhava's work and offered no objections to the association of the two categories shown in the *lTa phreng*. Thus, when it is clearly established in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* that sTon mun is a vehicle derived from the sūtras, accordingly gNubs chen considers it a causal vehicle based on the convention in the *lTa phreng*.

a way they interfuse each other to establish a nondual dynamic. Given this understanding, the practitioner, as presented above, is instructed to engage the conventional in the manner of ultimacy while embodying the ultimate in conventional appearances. In this simultaneous embrace, conventionality or ultimacy alone can never do the job; they must be, and are in actuality, inseparate. Nor should they be collapsed into one, for the ultimate and the conventional are not mutually inclusive.[85] Accordingly, they can only be revealed in their wholeness, and by taking this wholeness (*i.e.*, the simultaneous presence of the two truths) as the path, sTon mun is readily qualified as a fruitional vehicle.

This qualification can be further substantiated when one realizes that the sTon mun wholeness is not only nondual but also pregnant with infinite possibilities devoid of any conceptuality. As I have shown above, philosophically and contemplatively, not only is this indefiniteness related to the sTon mun practices of "negative paths," but it also leads to a logic of spontaneous presence, namely, that of one's spontaneous self-awareness. In the spontaneous presence of one's self-awareness, the reality of wholeness, nondual and indefinite, singular and plural, conventional and ultimate, is taken just as it is. Complete and perfect from the very beginning, the final fruition is spontaneously realized in the all-encompassing wholeness. In this way, without the conceptual flaw shown in gNubs chen's critique, my alternative wholeness characterization effectively places sTon mun, similar to Shenhui's sudden Chan, in the camp of the fruitional vehicle within the sūtric traditions.

The sTon mun wholeness that simultaneously embraces the two truths in a nondual dynamic also implies another nondual dynamic. That is the nondual, holistic dynamic of

[85] The fact that the ultimate and the conventional are not mutually inclusive can be easily seen as follows: Since the conventional on its own has forms, whereas the ultimate is formless. Evidently, they cannot be mutually inclusive.

one's being and knowing similar to the one seen in Shenhui's sudden Chan. That is, similar to Shenhui's "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā*, the sTon mun wholeness that embraces the two truths in mutual interfusion also involves both ontological and epistemological aspects. Namely, in the simultaneous embrace of the two truths, as the conventional is engaged in the manner of ultimacy, an ontological state (or being) of non-reification or non-abidance is implied in "the manner of ultimacy." On the other hand, as ultimacy is embodied in conventional appearances, an epistemological knowing with one's spontaneous self-awareness or original awareness must be present to wisely discern all the appearances.

Moreover, as the two truths mutually interfuse each other, the ontological being of non-abidance and the epistemological knowing of one's original awareness also mutually permeate each other so that the state of non-abidance is the presence of one's original awareness and vice versa. That is why Master Shinho gives the statement quoted above, *i.e.*, "The so-called 'awareness' is to come to the place or state of non-abidance." As a result of this brief analysis, one can arguably report that the sTon mun wholeness that simultaneously embraces the two truths is also a wholeness, in which one's being and knowing are thoroughly interfusing in a dynamic of nonduality; here, *being knows* and *knowing is*. In this ultimate relationship of ontology and epistemology, all conventional appearances unfold in a unique manner of knowing, in which the spontaneous presence of one's original awareness is the ultimate being.

Given the understanding that the sTon mun wholeness of the two interfusing truths also characterizes a nondual, holistic dynamic of being and knowing, what I have argued for the wholeness of Shenhui's "equal learning" is also applicable here. First, simiar to

Shenhui's "equal learning" of *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing, the sTon mun wholeness of being and knowing also integrates Klein's three types of nondualism into an integral whole and thereby embodies a holography of nondual relationships depicting the nonduality between objects, between self and others, and between one's present status and future ideal.[86] This is mainly due to the understanding that all conceptual categories and reifications, oppositions and sides, are utterly dissolved in a state of nonduality under the mutual interfusion and permeation of the ultimate and the conventional discussed above.

In addition, like Shenhui's "equal learning," the sTon mun wholeness of being and knowing also offers us a hermeneutic tool to explain the possibility of an artful endeavor for the realization of a fruitional practice. In Shenhui's case, to recapitulate succinctly, his "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā* depicts a nondual dynamic, or offers a kind of "kinetic energy," with which his integration of gradual cultivation within the context of sudden awakening can, on the one hand, avoid the gradualist's fault of dualistic conceptuality with the "no-thought" of *samādhi*-being dissolving (or transcending) all conceptual reification and, on the other hand, artfully implement the logic of immediacy in contemplation (thus the fruitional practice) with the wise discernment of *prajñā*-knowing applied to all activities. Similarly, in the sTon mun wholeness of being and knowing, the simultaneous embrace of the two truths avoids the limitation of conventionality with the ultimate being of non-abidance resonating with the pervading nature of all phenomena (or *dharmadhātu*), while artfully accomplishing the logic of immediacy in contemplation (thus the fruitional practice) with the spontaneous presence

[86] See my discussion in Chapter 2, Section III.B of this dissertation. See also Klein's discussion on the three types of nondualism (Klein, *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen*, 151-158).

of one's self- or original awareness embracing all conventional appearances.

Practically, the actualized artful endeavor of the sTon mun simultaneous embrace of the two truths is embodied in a constant and living, or holistic, practice that pervades one's being and is personified in one's present awareness as it experiences the everyday reality in its wholeness. Similar to Shenhui's sudden Chan, this holistic practice of sTon mun involves no exhortations to do this or not to do that. Its practitioner spontaneously acts according to need and responds as spoken to. To be sure, this spontaneous practice implies no laxity, indifference, or the wild spontaneity of an indulgent and rationalizing ego. Rather, it demands a holistic and open awareness from its practitioner, and with this holistic and open awareness, the practitioner profoundly and subtly engages all conventionality without falling into the dualistic trap of conventionality. Such a delicate endeavor is the essence of the sTon mun simultaneous embrace of the two truths, which, on the one hand, qualifies sTon mun to be the same as Shenhui's sudden Chan as a fruitional vehicle within the sūtric traditions and, on the other hand, offers an insight different from Shenhui's integration of suddenness and gradualness. Namely, the logic of immediacy in contemplation must allow conventionality for it to be practically implemented, but it can only allow conventionality in the context of ultimacy so that the dualistic implication in conventionality can be mended.

Chapter 5. Spontaneous Presence ad Open Awareness: gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's Presentation of Spontaneity as a Central Feature of Dzogchen Practice

Tracking the traces left by the Simultaneists of sTon mun and further demonstrating other innovative manifestations of the idea of immediacy, Chapter 5 presents the early teachings of Tibetan Dzoxgchen codified by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in his *bSam gtan mig sgron.*[1] As the highest rung in the doxographic ladder of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, Dzogchen, as a subject of our investigation, not only bears a historical connection with Chan and sTon mun as shown in the previous chapters, but also associates with them doctrinally, particularly in regard to the original perfection of one's mind-nature (Ch. *xinxing* 心性; Tib. *sems nyid*) and its instantaneous and spontaneous presence. Below, based on gNubs chen's presentation of Dzogchen teachings, let us further explore this doctrinal affinity and examine how gNubs chen's emphasis of spontaneity as a central feature of Dzogchen practice advances our understanding of the logic of immediacy in contemplation, in addition to Shenhui's sudden Chan and the simultaneity of sTon mun.

Following gNubs chen's exposition, I begin the chapter investigating the main teachings of Dzogchen that emphasize primordial perfection (Tib. *ye nas rdzogs pa*) and spontaneous presence (Tib. *lhun gyis grub pa*).[2] In the discussion, we will see how

[1] Even though Samten G. Karmay has a chapter on gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's Dzogchen teachings in his *The Great Perfection* (107-120), his presentation is different from mine at least in two aspects. First, his presentation is not as extensive as mine both in terms of how much he includes gNubs chen's Dzogchen teachings and how extensive he analyzes these teachings. Secondly, his presentation does not address our subject matter, the logic of immediacy in contemplation, in relation to gNubs chen's presentation of Dzogchen teachings. In addition to Karmay's *The Great Perfection*, for introductory materials on Buddhist and Bön Dzogchen teachings and history, see, *e.g.*, Pettit, *Mipham's Beacon of Certainty*; Dalai Lama, *Dzogchen*; Wangyal, *Wonders of the Natural Mind*; Schmidt, *The Dzogchen Primer*; Tulku Thondup, *The Practice of Dzogchen by Longchen Rabjam*; van Schaik, *Approaching the Great Perfection*; Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*.

[2] The Tibetan term *lhun gyis grub pa* or *lhun grub* can be rendered as spontaneous presence, spontaneous accomplishment, spontaneous performance, or spontaneity. I have chosen "spontaneous presence" primarily due to the reason that it gives a sense of natureness or suchness with the term "presence." In

gNubs chen's Dzogchen teachings of primordial basis (Tib. *gdod ma'i gzhi* or simply *gzhi*) and open awareness (Tib. *rig pa*)[3] give rise to a nondual, holistic dynamic of being and knowing that is similar to the ones seen in the cases of Shenhui's sudden Chan and the simultaneity of sTon mun. But, with a much stronger emphasis on primordial perfection and spontaneous presence (than the previous cases), gNubs chen's Dzogchen depicts a fruitional path on which one resumes one's original Buddhahood (Tib. *yang sangs rgyas*) rather than becomes a new Buddha (Tib. *sangs rgyas gsar ba*).

Based on gNubs chen's presentation of nine Dzogchen views (Tib. *lta ba*), I further explore the various aspects of Dzogchen teachings and their insights into the logic of immediacy in contemplation in relation to what we have learned from the cases of Chan and sTon mun. Emphasizing ideas including non-referentiality, spontaneity, self-nature, bliss, nonduality, wholeness, and suchness, not only do these Dzogchen views provide important characteristics to facilitate our understanding of Dzogchen as a whole, but they also concur with and further extend what we learned from Shenhui's sudden Chan and sTon mun regarding the logic of immediacy in contemplation. Yet, unlike Shenhui's integration of suddenness and gradualness and the sTon mun simultaneous embrace of the ultimate and the conventional, gNubs chen's presentation of these Dzogchen views especially brings a unique aroma of simplicity and naturalness to the logic of immediacy in contemplation.

Finally, as gNubs chen turns philosophical or doctrinal principles into instructions for contemplative practice, I conclude this chapter with gNubs chen's explication of early

Dzogchen, reality is primordially complete and perfect; nothing needs to be accomplished or established. See also Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, 129-130.

[3] In the presentation, self-arisen reflexive awareness (Tib. *rang byung rang rig*), self-awareness (Tib. *rang rig*), and open awareness (Tib. *rig pa*) are treated as synonyms.

Dzogchen methods for letting the mind be (Tib. *blo bzhag*) in its natural state. In essence, these early Dzogchen practices, unlike their later counterparts, do not stress a fixed set of ritual or procedures such as how to sit or visualize the deity step by step. Instead, they place an unequivocal emphasis on how Dzogchen followers should *act in accord* (Tib. *mthun pa'i spyod pa*) with the "ascertained principles" (Tib. *thag chod pa'i don*) of Dzogchen in the manner of neither-grasping-nor-relinquishing at all times. In such a way, the contemplatives embody a Dzogchen living practice that not only takes all phenomena as the path to enlightenment but also actualizes the logic of immediacy in contemplation with the central feature of gNubs chen's Dzogchen, namely, spontaneous presence.

I. Spontaneous Presence in Dzogchen: How It Makes a Fruitional Path Possible

After his initial homage to the glorious Samantabhadra and a brief opening, Klong chen pa (1308-1364) begins his *Chos dbyings mdzod* (*The Precious Treasure of the Basic Space of Phenomena*), one of his *seven treasuries* (Tib. *mdzod bdun*) on Dzogchen,[4] with the verse nicely translated by Richard Barron as follows:

> Within the expanse of spontaneous presence is the ground for all that arises.
> Empty in essence, continuous by nature,
> it has never existed as anything whatsoever, yet arises as anything at all.
> Within the expanse of the three kayas, although saṃsāra and nirvāṇa arise naturally,
> They do not stray from basic space---such is the blissful realm that is

[4] In the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism, Klong chen pa has been probably recognized as the most important codifer of its teachings. Among the two hundred and seventy some titles Klong chen pa wrote, the *mdzod bdun* or *seven treasuries* are considered his crowning achievement, and each of them presents Klong chen pa's understanding of Dzogchen teachings said to be based on his direct experience rather than on speculative thought. For a biography of Klong chen pa, see, *e.g.*, Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 109-117 and Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, Vol. I, 575-596; for a brief introduction of the *seven treasures* and his other works, see, *e.g.*, Longchen Rabjam, *Kindly Bent to Ease Us, Part I: Mind* (translated and annotated by Herbert V. Guenther), xiii-xxv and Germano, *Poetic Thought, the Intelligent Universe. and the Mystery of Self*, 10-38.

the true nature of phenomena.[5]

After some detailed explanation, Klong chen pa then concludes this first section of his *Chos dbyings mdzod* with the following verse (again translated by Barron):

> In brief, within the ultimate womb of basic space, spacious and spontaneously present,
> whatever arises as the dynamic energy of its display---as saṃsāra or nirvāṇa---
> in the very moment of simply arising has never known existence as saṃsāra or nirvāṇa.
> Whatever arises in a dream due to the dynamic energy of sleep does not actually exist.
> There is only self-knowing awareness, the blissful place of rest,
> extending infinitely as the supremely spacious state of spontaneous equalness.[6]

In these two poetic verses of Klong chen pa lies a succinct description of reality from the Dzogchen perspective. That is, all phenomena of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, albeit without really existing as saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, arise spontaneously as the dynamic display (Tib. *rtsal*) of their ground (Tib. *gzhi*) or primordial basis (Tib. *gdod ma'i gzhi*). This primordial basis is empty in essence (Tib. *ngo bo stong pa*) and continuous by nature (Tib. *rang bzhin ma 'gags pa*). It never exists as any object but arises as everything. This arising occurs for the direct perception (Tib. *mngon sum*) of one's self-awareness or reflexively open awareness (Tib. *rang rig*) that not only is the blissful place of rest (Tib. *bde ba'i mal*) but also extends infinitely as the supreme state of spontaneous equalness (Tib. *lhun mnyam*).

Yet, Klong chen pa's poetic description of Dzogchen reality had long been recognized and written down in prose by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in his *bSam*

[5] Longchen Rabjam, *The Precious Treasure of the Basic Space of Phenomena* (translated by Richard Barron), 3, 5.
[6] Ibid., 11.

gtan mig sgron, which we are about to explore. The doctrinal continuity between gNubs chen and Klong chen pa over the time period of three centuries attests to, I think, not only the consistency of this particular teaching but also its centrality in the system. With this centrality, what gNubs chen intends with such a description of Dzogchen reality as his introductory outline could be to stress that this introduction both summarizes the essence of Dzogchen teachings and encompasses Dzogchen in its wholeness. Perhaps, in effect, gNubs chen attempts to tell us that the introduction is also the completion, as the path is also the fruition.

A. The Ground: Primordial Basis and Open Awareness

How can the introduction be the completion and the fruition be the path? gNubs chen explains that it is because everything is already in the state of *great perfection* (Tib. *rdzogs chen*) since the primordial beginning; that is the meaning of Atiyoga, the peak of all yogas, and that is also the reason why it is named Dzogchen, the Great Perfection or Completeness. In this natural perfection and completeness, one is liberated in one's pure nakedness (Tib. *gcer grol*), that is, to experience all phenomena, saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, within the direct perception of one's reflexively open awareness (or simply open awareness). As it is in Klong chen pa's poetic expression, this open awareness, for gNubs chen, is also the only subject to realize the "great objective" (Tib. *don chen po*) of Dzogchen. Specifically, gNubs chen begins his chapter on the teachings of Dzogchen with the following words.

> Now, as for demonstrating the meaning of Atiyoga, the supreme vehicle, the highest yoga, the mother of all conquerors, is named Dzogchen, *i.e.*, the Great Perfection. If one asks why, it is because it teaches in detail how to realize the naked liberation, in which all the inconceivable phenomena exist in the state of effortless, spontaneous

> perfection. The meaning of this state of spontaneous presence in essence, which is the treasure of all similar vehicles and the great universal ancestor, is to be experienced in direct perception by open awareness, but not to be placed in [conceptual] mind. [Moreover,] this great meaning is lucidly clear to the open awareness.[7]

From the above, for gNubs chen, the open awareness that directly experiences all phenomena in their state of primordial perfection and that lucidly realizes the reality of spontaneous presence is not a conceptual mind (Tib. *blo*). To be specific, this open awareness does not "measure or examine" (Tib. *gzhal ba*) like that of one's own discriminating wisdom (Tib. *rang gi so sor rtogs pa'i shes rab*)[8] taught in the scriptures of tantras, authoritative statements, and quintessential instructions (Tib. *rgyud lung man ngag gi gzhung*). With respect to the necessity of this non-examination, gNubs chen explains that this is because all phenomena "have never molted or altered their colors" (Tib. *spu ma brjes mdog ma bsgyur ba*) from the very beginning; they are primordially complete and perfect. Indeed, if everything is always in the state of completion and perfection, how can there be any object of comprehension (Tib. *gzhal bya*) as it in itself indicates a gap between awareness and understanding? For, to comprehend or measure (Tib. *'jal ba*) something is inherently dualistic and incomplete because a measurement is predicated upon (1) an objective reference (Tib. *dmigs pa*) or individual substance (Tib. *ngo bo so so*) and (2) a fixed line of logic (Tib. *gtan tshigs*) or tenet system (Tib. *grub*

[7] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 290.6-291.3; de nas theg pa'i mchog rnal 'byor gyi phul yang tog/ rgyal ba ril gyi yum a ti yo ga'i don bstan pa ni/ mtshan rdzogs pa (291) chen po zhes bya ste/ ci'i phyir zhe na/ bsam gyis mi khyab pa'i chos thams cad ma brtsal lhun rdzogs pa'i don/ gcer grol go bar bya ba'i phyir zhib tu bstan te/ de lta bu'i theg pa thams cad kyi yang mdzod spyi mes chen po 'di'i ngo bo lhun gyis grub* pa'i ngang nyid kyi don/ rang rig pas mngon sum khong du chud nas blo bzhag par byar yang med pa'i don chen po rang gi rig pa la gsal bar bya ba yang/ * the original only has lhun gyis pa'i; grub is added based on the context.

[8] This implies that, for gNubs chen, the reflexively discriminating wisdom (Tib. *rang gi so sor rtogs pa'i shes rab*) is different from the wisdom of reflexively discriminating awareness (Tib. *rang rig so sor rtogs pa'i ye shes*) that is important in the later traditions of Dzogchen.

pa'i mtha'). While the former makes the measurement dualistic,[9] the latter, according to Gödel's theorems, makes any measurement in a closed system incomplete.[10] Thus, as presented, the said primordial completion and perfection can only be self-arisen (Tib. *rang byung*), as the nature of ultimate awakening (Tib. *sangs rgyas pa'i rang bzhin*) in the sphere of the "great wholeness" (Tib. *thig le chen po*),[11] the reality of all being in its totality and myriad diversity. In gNubs chen's words, we have:

> If one asks how one knows it [*i.e.*, the reality of spontaneous presence], in this vehicle of highest yoga, not a single phenomenon can be measured by one's own discriminating wisdom, as the scriptures of tantras, authoritative statements, and quintessential instructions [have taught]. If one asks why, it is because all the so-called phenomena have never molted or altered their colors from the very beginning. [Rather,] they are the self-arisen primordial wisdom, the nature of enlightenment in the sphere of the "great wholeness," with respect to which, who has seen it as an object of comprehension? Who has shown its logic? To what tenet system can one entrust it? With what can one measure [*i.e.*, comprehend] it? All phenomena are non-graspable because they do not have any individual substance.[12]

In essence, what the above two passages of gNubs chen convey is very much the same as what Klong chen pa articulates in the poetic verses quoted above. Succinctly put, it is the reality of Great Completeness, in which all phenomena, primordially in the state

[9] While it is true that a measurement predicated upon an objective reference and a fixed line of logic is dualistic, thus invalid in the Dzogchen sense, it is also true that a valid meaure (Skt. *pramāṇa*; Tib. *tshad ma*) is completely possible in the system of Dzogchen. The Bön Dzogchen text *gTan tshigs gal mdo rig pa'i tshad ma* (*Authenticity of Open Awareness*) particularly addresses this subject; for a detailed study of the text, see Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*.

[10] On the incompleteness of a closed logic system, see Gödel's theorems of incompleteness, which are nicely presented, *e.g.*, in Smith, *An Introduction to Gödel's Theorems*.

[11] For a discussion on the reasons why *thig le* is translated as "wholeness" rather than "drop" or "semen" commonly used in other contexts, see Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, 69 (footnote 38).

[12] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 291.3-292.1; ji ltar shes par bya zhe na/ shin tu rnal 'byor gyi theg pa 'di la/ rgyud lung man ngag gi gzhung ltar/ dang po gzhal bya'i chos gcig la/ rang gi so sor rtogs pa'i shes rab kyis gzhal bar byar yang med pa ste/ de ci'i phyir zhe na/ chos so cog tu grags pa thams cad/ ye gdod ma nyid nas spu ma brjes mdog ma bsgyur bar rang byung gi ye shes thig le chen po'i klong du sangs rgyas pa'i rang bzhin la/ dngos po gzhal byar su yis mthong/ gtan tshigs su (292) yis bstan/ grub pa'i mtha' ci zhig chol/ 'jal byed gang gis byas te/ de dag gi ngo bo so so ba med pa'i phyir ma dmigs so.

of spontaneous perfection, arise as the dynamic display of their primordial basis and are only authentically experienced in the direct perception of one's open awareness. When understood correctly, this synoptic description of Dzogchen reality shows us the basic structure of Dzogchen, its base, path, and fruition (Tib. *gzhi lam 'bras bu*). Particularly, its base is the primordial basis that dynamically displays all existence, named the "great universal ancestor" (Tib. *spyi mes chen po*), the "great wholeness," the "great being" (Tib. *bdag nyid chen po*), the "awakened mind" (Tib. *byang chub kyi sems*), and the "mind-nature" (Tib. *sems nyid*) in various places.[13] Its path is to invoke one's innately open awareness which is not a dualistic measurer (Tib. *'jal byed*), but the "self-arisen primordial wisdom" (Tib. *rang byung ye shes*) as well as the awakening nature of one's primordial basis. Its fruition is to realize the spontaneous presence of all phenomena, the whole being of one's primordial basis, in the direct knowing of one's reflexive awareness.

Yet, if one's primordial basis, being complete and perfect, cannot be an object of comprehension, as gNubs chen has stated, then in what way does one's reflexively open awareness experience the primordial basis in its direct knowing? Even though gNubs chen does not give a full answer to this question in the above introduction, he does imply, as I have explained above, that one's open awareness is not a dualistic measurer but the self-arisen primordial wisdom and the awakening nature of the primordial basis. In that way, what open awareness signifies is the innate gnosis or epistemic mechanism of one's primordial basis itself; the basis is not only the matrix of all being but also the knower that knows itself. Thus, open awareness is simply the basis's reflexivity. Accordingly,

[13] For a more detailed discussion on the theory of primordial basis, see Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 175-190.

with this reflexive understanding, open awareness is indeed not a dualistic measurer with respect to the primordial basis. Rather, it is its own nature, like air in air or water in water without an iota of separation or incompatibility. In this way, one's own open awareness naturally experiences one's primordial basis in its *direct knowing by nature*, an 'im-mediate' knowing epitomizing the reality of spontaneous presence.

This brief analysis of the relationship between open awareness and primordial basis effectively puts Dzogchen in the same category of Chan and sTon mun in terms of having a similar holistic dynamic between being and knowing, in which being (*i.e.*, primordial basis) is epistemological and knowing (*i.e.*, open awareness) is ontological. Moreover, they interfuse each other with a nondual dynamic (yet they are not "collapsed" into a oneness). In this interfusing nondual dynamic of being and knowing, the fruition of realizing "the spontaneous presence of all phenomena, the whole being of one's primordial basis, in the direct knowing of one's open awareness" coincides with the manifestation of one's open awareness, for this very manifestation also reveals the abiding state of one's primordial basis that dynamically displays all phenomena, in both its totality and diversity. In this way, as I have reported above, gNubs chen's introductory outline not only summarizes the essence of Dzogchen teachings while encompassing Dzogchen in its wholeness, but also readily points out that the path of Great Perfection is nothing but its fruition.

B. The Path: The Spontaneous Presence of Open Awareness

To further expound the aforementioned fruitional path of Dzogchen that in practice emerges from one's own open awareness or self-arisen primordial wisdom, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes goes on to say that since Dzogchen, like other Buddhist schools,

understands everything to be without essence or substance (Tib. *ngo bo*), one should not engage in examination or evaluation (Tib. *gzhal*), for it deludes one's mind through developing the grasping of subject and object as two distinct phenomena (Tib. *gnyis 'dzin*).[14] Even though the idea of essence-less-ness or non-substantiality is usually not a primary Dzogchen feature, especially considering its emphasis of primordial perfection and spontaneous presence, gNubs chen however uses non-substantiality as the reason to propose the practice of non-investigation, as shown in the previous quotation. Perhaps, this strategic move helps gNubs chen to emphasize the distinguishing feature of Dzogchen by contrasting its fruitional practice with other non-fruitional practices. So, playing the role of an imaginary interlocutor, he asks, "If the three realms (Tib. *khams gsum*) are investigated to understand their nature, then how could there be no object of comprehension (Tib. *gzhal bya*) in the system of Dzogchen?" To that, gNubs chen replies,

> [This shows] the unawareness of *tathatā* or suchness [on the part of the interlocutor]. The meaning of the so-called non-abandonment and non-establishment is that everything is naturally clear in the state of spontaneous presence. [So,] when investigating the nonduality, it is not that there is a distinct designation (*i.e.*, a distinct entity) that measures [and another that is being measured], [but that] the straightforward path is to arrive at the immediate state of one's own open awareness [measuring] anything whatsoever without thinking, without investigation, and without analysis. This is asserted to be the most superior way of measuring.[15]

Above, we see, without mentioning non-substantiality, gNubs chen clearly points out that the Dzogchen ideas of non-abandonment (Tib. *ma spangs*) and non-establishment

[14] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 292.1-292.5.

[15] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 293.1-293.4; de kho na nyid kyi ma rig pa ste/ ma spangs ma bsgrubs zhes pa'i don gyis/ thams cad lhun gyis grub pa'i ngang du gsal ba la gnyis med la brtags na zhes pa'i sgra yang tha dad pas 'jal ba ni ma yin te/ rang rig pas ci yang ma bsams la ma brtags ma dpyad pa nyid thog tu phebs pas drang po'i lam ste de ni gzhal ba dam pa 'dod do.

(Tib. *ma bsgrubs*) are straightforwardly derived from the spontaneous presence of *tathatā* or the suchness of reality. This argument implicitly indicates that other approaches have missed the mark as they do not directly access this suchness. Being spontaneously perfect, nothing is to be either abandoned or established (*i.e.*, grasped or reified), and similarly, there is no need of an investigating subject if everything has already been shown (and known) to be in the state of spontaneous presence. What needs to be understood is the nonduality of one's open awareness and its primordial basis, for open awareness knows primordial basis, the matrix of all being, without the need of thinking (Tib. *bsams pa*), investigation (Tib. *brtags pa*), or analysis (Tib. *dpyad pa*).[16] Thus, in Dzogchen, there is still knowing (or measuring), but it is not a dualistic measuring, in which an investigating subject or knower measures an investigated object. Rather, it is a direct knowing by self-nature, a reflexive knowing, which, for gNubs chen, is the most straightforward path (*e.g.*, as it goes straight to the fruition) and the most superior knowing of Great Perfection (*e.g.*, as it is an unmediated knowing).

At this point, one may wonder that, no matter whether it is the straightforward path or the most superior knowing, how can one liberate the mind without investigation or analysis, as investigation has been emphasized by most other Buddhist schools such as the Madhyamaka and the Yogācāra?[17] To that, gNubs chen uncompromisingly expresses the Dzogchen stance of liberation by non-action (Tib. *bya ba med pa*), for everything is perfect as it already is and the bondage we investigate and analyze is only conceptually

[16] Here, there is even a note by gNubs chen quoting the *Sems bsgom rgyud* (the *Tantra on Mind Cultivation*) to warn that investigation is deceptive (Tib. *brtags pa 'khrul*); see Ibid, 293.3. The full note reads: "The *Sems bsgom rgyud* says: Various texts have said that the Victorious One arises from non-investigation; investigation is deceptive (sems bsgom rgyud las/ la la ma brtags pa las rgyal ba 'byung gi brtags pa 'khrul zhes 'byung phyir)."

[17] For the role of investigation or analysis in the realization of Buddhist liberation, see, *e.g.*, Klein, *Knowledge and Liberation*.

imputed but actually inconceivable or non-graspable; he explains,

> It is a liberation [attained] by simply being effortless. If one asks why, it is because it goes beyond conceptualization and analysis, and bondage itself is non-graspable. The so-called liberation is only an appellation. Furthermore, the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che* says, "Everything is just as such and immutable. Liberation is [only] liberation by non-action. Through the non-sought self-arisen primordial wisdom, even the path of liberation from [the idea of] liberation is emptied." When realizing the meaning of non-action according to that, one is liberated by this very non-action.[18]

Undoubtedly, for Dzogchen practitioners like gNubs chen, when all existence is characterized to be always in the state of spontaneous perfection, neither arduous effort nor laxity is the answer to this spontaneity. Rather, it is to artfully allow oneself to be in the spontaneous presence with one's open awareness or self-arisen primordial wisdom that, not sought, arises effortlessly when one is completely free of conceptualization and analysis. However, for practitioners who have worked diligently in Buddhist practices such as the "Three Studies" or the "Six Perfections," one would surely think that they are entitled to ask how Dzogchen can demonstrate that this principle of effortless non-action (Tib. *bya rtsol med pa* or *bya ba med pa*) accomplishes its fruitional path. To address this inquiry, gNubs chen emphasizes the following three elements: (1) the necessity of scriptural transmission (Tib. *lung*) and quintessential instructions (Tib. *man ngag*), (2) the uniqueness of "negative paths" in the manifestation of the supreme direct cognizer (Tib. *mngon sum tshad pa*), and (3) the deceptive nature of conceptualization and analysis (Tib. *rtog dpyod*).

It should be worthwhile noting that, by emphasizing the above three elements, I

[18] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 295.1-295.5; ... grol bar byar med pa nyid kyis grol ba ste/ ci'i phyir zhe na/ rtog dpyod las 'das pa la bcings pa nyid ma dmigs pa'i phyir tha snyad tsam du grol zhes bya 'o/ de yang rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che las/ don rnams ji bzhin mi bskyod do/ bya ba med pas grol bas grol/ rang byung ye shes btsal med pas/ grol nas grol ba'i lam yang stong/ zhes gsungs te/ don bya ba med pas de ji lta bar rig par bya ba med pa nyid kyis grol to.

believe, gNubs chen also implicitly suggests that Dzogchen followers must understand that the artful endeavor they take to reveal their open awareness must involve some "skillful effort" which may include practices similar to the "preparatory or foundational practices" (Tib. *sngon 'gro*) developed by later Dzogchen traditions.[19] It is because such "skillful effort" is needed at least initially (if not for the entire path) for them to either receive scriptural transmission or to apprehend quintessential instructions to even begin the journey towards the state of spontaneous perfection. This idea of involving "skillful effort" in the context of spontaneity is, in essence, similar to Shenhui's integration of gradualness in the context of suddenness and the sTon mun embracing or engaging the conventional in the manner of ultimacy; they are all meant for the followers to artfully actualize the logic of immediacy in contemplation but in a way with which the followers will not fall into the bondage or deviation of arduous effort, gradualness, or conventionality. Earlier we have shown how Shenhui and the Simultaneists establish their cases. Here, to understand how gNubs chen addresses this particular issue from the Dzogchen perspective, let us further delve into the contents of the above three elements which gNubs chen identifies to be essential for the Dzogchen path of spontaneous presence.

First, regarding how to realize the Dzogchen principle of effortless non-action, gNubs chen unequivocally underscores the necessity of scriptural transmission and quintessential instructions. In the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, not only do we see plenty of evidence showing that early tantric scriptures including some Mahāyoga tantras and quintessential instructions of various masters (partially illustrated below) are a major

[19] For an introduction to these foundational practices, see, *e.g.*, Patrul Rinpoche, *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*.

source for gNubs chen's presentation of Dzogchen teachings. But he also quotes the *sPyi bcangs* (*The Universally Held*)[20] telling us their unique importance; he states,

> The *sPyi bcangs* says, "The great ocean of Secret Mantra cannot be understood through examples, valid logic, or knowledge of inference. Therefore, the vast Secret Mantra, bearing clear and powerful spiritual attainment but deeply inconceivable, is very difficult to fathom. It can only be achieved by those who have obtained scriptural transmission and quintessential instructions."[21]

Accordingly, with the quoted passage, gNubs chen, on the one hand, classifies Dzogchen as part of the Secret Mantra or Mantrayāna (Tib. *gsang sngags*), thus separating it from what he considers the causal vehicles of sūtric traditions. On the other hand, he also further underlines the necessity to have valid scriptural transmission and quintessential instructions to practice a fruitional vehicle like Dzogchen. As a result, the message gNubs chen offers, I think, is that not only is the fruitional principle of effortless non-action or spontaneous presence in Dzogchen beyond logic and reasoning, but it also requires the sanction of a lama or guru.[22] Arguably, what the need for this sanction may signify is that a fruitional vehicle like Dzogchen, being powerful yet difficult to fathom, must be guided and demonstrated by someone who has gone before. And, in addition to this guidance of a guru, its practitioners must also recognize that preparation such as foundational practices done in a skillful manner is a necessity for realizing the fruitional

[20] According to Samten G. Karmay, the *sPyi bcangs* is one of the 18 root texts in the Mind Series (Tib. *sems sde*) of the Dzogchen tradition (Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 110). For a brief introduction of the three series, namely, Mind Series, Space Series (Tib. *klong sde*), and Esoteric Precept Series (Tib. *man ngag sde*) of the Dzogchen tradition, see Anspal, "Lost in Space: Tibetan Formulations of the *rDzogs-chen klong-sde*," 117-120, and for a more detailed discussion, see Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 206-215.

[21] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 295.5-296.296.1; spyi bcangs las kyang/ gsang sngags rgya mtsho chen po ni/ dpe dang tshad ma gtan tshigs dang/ rjes su dpag pa'i shes rab kyis/ rtogs par nus pa ma yin te/ de bas gsang sngags bdag nyid che/ dngos grub rlabs chen 'phrigs pa can/ bsam yas gting ni dpag dka' bas/ lung dang man ngag thob pas 'grub/ ces 'byung.

[22] gNubs chen also quotes the *Sems bsgom rdo la gser zhun* attributed to Mañjuśrīmitra, another one of the 18 root texts in the Mind Series, to support the need of a guru for practitioners on the path. See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 296.1-296.3.

vehicle or path as well.

Following the necessity of scriptural transmission and quintessential instructions, gNubs chen further asserts to his audience that, in Dzogchen, what scriptural transmission and quintessential instructions point out is the "negative path" such as non-examination (Tib. *gzhal du med pa*), non-comprehension (Tib. *rtogs par byar med par*), non-studying (Tib. *bslab tu med pa*), or non-thinking (Tib. *bsam spyod med pa*). These "negative paths" are meant to cease all conceptual activities by sympathetically resonating with the suchness logic of unmistaken reality (Tib. *ma nor ba yang dag pa'i gtan tshigs*). In this way, similar to those in the cases of Chan and sTon mun, these so-called "negative paths" are not "negative" in the sense of trying to negate or exclude something. Rather, they try to directly bring forth the spontaneous nature of unmistaken reality. Here, gNubs chen further reasons, the deeper implication of the "negative paths" is that one cannot realize the meaning or state of being free from conceptualization through the use of the language of conceptualization, as it is the means of mental analysis or investigation.[23] To do so is just like trying to find gold in the pebbles (Tib. *bong ba*); no matter how long one looks at them, one will not find any gold. Instead, in order to find real gold, one needs to directly see the gold.

Consequently, gNubs chen concludes that on the fruitional path of Dzogchen one has to, from the beginning,[24] rely on a direct cognizer that is in accord with the nature of effortless reality.[25] So, in Dzogchen, the supreme direct cognizer, one's open awareness

[23] On how Dzogchen deals specifically with issues related to mental analysis or authentication, see Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, 25-51; see also 137-165.

[24] Even though other Buddhist vehicles also recognize the nature of effortless reality, it is understood that they do not aim at it from the beginning of the practice. For example, the Madhyamaka understands that, by the path of seeing (Tib. *mthong lam*), one's practice is effortless. But, before it, from the Madhyamaka perspective, effort is required.

[25] For a more detailed discussion on the theme of effortlessness in the teachings of Dzogchen, see Klein

or self-arisen primordial wisdom, is revealed through the practice of effortless non-action, for it is only through effortless non-action that the all-encompassing wholeness of enlightenment (Tib. *byang chub*) can ever be realized. Just as gNubs chen quotes the *rNal 'byor grub pa'i lung chen po* (*The Great Instructions on the Realization of Yoga*)[26] saying that, if everything is the quintessence (Tib. *snying po*) of enlightenment, and thus being everywhere, resides nowhere, then how can a wholeness of no locus be found by any purposeful and directionally limited effort?[27]

At this point, gNubs chen acknowledges the objection of some tantric practitioner (TIb. *sngaps pa*), who challenges, even if the basis of all phenomena is effortless and as such, a person still bound to the habit of thinking can never be like that. Therefore, even in understanding quintessential instructions, the conceptualization and analysis of one's discriminating wisdom is still essential. To that, gNubs chen replies with several counter examples. While these arguments must allow the "skillful effort" discussed earlier, they also forcefully reject the idea of making arduous effort, even the effort of making things nondual. In gNubs chen's words, we have,

> Having examined the dharma of dualistic things, the very action of making them nondual is dualistic. If one asks why, it is because [as long as] the making of nonduality exists, duality will arise.[28]

With respect to the spontaneous presence of one's open awareness, any intentional action is dualistic, for the very thought of "intentional making" involves a grasping

and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, 119-136.

[26] This tantric text is also named, *sPyi mdo dgongs 'dus* (*The Great Condensed Meaning*), which is considered a fundamental scripture in Anuyoga Tantra.

[27] This paragraph is written based on the material in gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 296.1-297.2.

[28] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 299.3-299.4; dngos po gnyis pa'i chos gzhal nas gnyis med du byas pa nyid gnyis pa'o/ de ci'i phyir zhe na/ gnyis med bya ba yod pas/ gnyis pa yang 'byung ngo.

(Tib. *'dzin pa*) that falsely divides reality into the subject that grasps and the object that is grasped. Here, only some artful endeavor that is delicately performed in accord with the principle of effortlessness is allowed, for effortlessness or spontaneity is the characteristic of reality. Accordingly, in a style similar to a Chan *gongan* 公案 or *koan*, gNubs chen advises his audience that as long as there is one, there will be another one;[29] that is, as long as there is even an iota of conceptualization and analysis, there will be some other more. In this way, gNubs chen strongly warns his audience that conceptualization and analysis are really delusional or deceptive (Tib. *'khrul ba*), and, in effect, prevent one from ever seeing the reality of spontaneous presence. Because of that, a great person (Tib. *mi chen po*), who walks on the fruitional path of Great Perfection with open awareness, will not practice in such a manner.[30]

C. The Fruition: The Resumption of Original Buddhahood

Succinctly but sufficiently, the above exposition has attempted to delineate the fruitional path of Dzogchen that is rooted in the spontaneous perfection of all phenomena. Such a fruitional path asks its practitioner to "nakedly" present, or more precisely, be, him/herself in the perfection with one's open awareness revealed through the "negative paths" such as the practice of effortless non-action. In a way, this exposition is enough to illustrate the basic outline of Dzogchen. However, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes further plays the role of an imaginary interlocutor asking for more clarification. Thus, he asks, "If these [conceptualizations and analyses] are all mistaken, what is the correct

[29] Ibid, 302.1. gcig yod na gcig yod pa.
[30] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 303.4-304.6.

principle really like?"[31] Regarding that, gNubs chen once again emphasizes the spontaneous presence of everything that requires no designations or labels; he writes in response,

> From the beginning there is not [even] the designation of nonduality. As there is just a spontaneous rest in effortlessness, there is not even an imputed label for effortlessness. From the very beginning there is not the name of spontaneous presence. In the original state of rDzog-pa-chen-po [*i.e.*, Great Perfection] there does not exist the mental label of Great Perfection. From the very beginning self-arisen primordial wisdom has not ever been labeled as self-arisen primordial wisdom whatsoever.[32]

By emphasizing that everything is just as it is in the state of spontaneous perfection without any conceptual designation or labeling, gNubs chen clearly indicates that from the beginning of the path, mental conceptualization and investigation have no place, not to mention that, as all other Buddhist schools agree, there are no such conceptual activities in the final fruition. The correct principle is just as it is; it is in the spontaneous perfection of all things from the very beginning. Having known this, don't conceptualize it or try to grasp it via designations. Such is the delicacy of the artful endeavor Dzogchen followers must realize, for any bit of grasping or reification will separate one from the original state of Great Perfection. Here, one has to be *brave enough and artful enough* to simply assume this original perfection of oneself so that one's primordial wisdom will then self-arise and effortlessly take its course in the inexpressible (Tib. *brjod du med*) suchness of living reality.

With respect to this living reality or the realm of phenomenal reality (Tib. *chos kyi*

[31] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 304.6-305.1; de dag 'khrul na don ma nor ba de nyid ji lta ba yin ce na.

[32] Ibid, 305.1-305.4; ... ye gnyis su med pa'i tha snyad med pa/ ngang gis brtsal ba dang bral zin pa la rtsal ba bral bar yang sgro gdags su med pa/ gdod nas lhun gyis grub pa'i ming med pa/ ye nyid rdzogs pa chen po la rdzogs pa chen po'i blo gdags bral ba/ gdod nas rang byung gi ye shes rang byung gi ye shes su'ang gdags su med pa.

dbyings) that is inexpressible and beyond words, gNubs chen further points out that just as neither oneself nor others exist primordially, Dzogchen followers, from the beginning, take the principle, "there is neither object to be known (Tib. *shes bya*) nor subject as the knower (Tib. *zhes byed*)," as the path. Given this fruitional path, it is not seeing the inherent nature of everything that is called 'seeing the truth of the authentic meaning' (Tib. *yang dag pa'i don gyi bden pa mthong*) with one's open awareness, for nothing possesses inherent nature to begin with. In this seeing of "no seeing" (Tib. *ma mthong*) gNubs chen tells us, nothing is left unseen. Yet, what is this seeing of no seeing with one's open awareness? gNubs chen quotes the *rNal 'byor grub pa'i lung chen po* again to clarify:

> Whatever visual forms are seen have no inherent nature. This "no seeing" is ascertained to be the [true] seeing itself. Thus, one experiences in actuality the inexpressible open awareness and the "attainment" of seeing is merely a designation; … the appearances of seeing and no seeing have no inherent nature. That which embraces all is the profound and hidden intention and action. When one's self-arisen open awareness directly manifests, it is called the very seeing of self-arisen primordial wisdom.[33]

So, essentially, gNubs chen's seeing of no seeing, in sūtric terms, is to see (*i.e.*, to realize non-conceptually and in a vibrantly experiential manner) that everything is devoid of inherent nature (Tib. *rdzas rnyed med pa*). Yet, this realization is only a gate-way to let one's inexpressible open awareness, which embraces and suffuses all but reifies nothing, to directly manifest. It is this direct manifestation that is called true seeing in Dzogchen. Here, we surely see something very much reminiscent of Shenhui's "no-thought" and the "negative paths" of sTon mun discussed in the previous chapters.

[33] Ibid, 308.1-310.4; gzugs snang gang mthong rdzas rnyed med/ ma mthong de mthong nyid nges pas/ brjod med rang rig nyams rnyed la/ mthong rnyed tha snyad tsam du 'byung/ … [310.3] mthong dang ma mthong snang la rang bzhin med/ kun 'dus gsang ba'i dgongs spyod zab mo ni/ rang byung rang rig mngon sum snang dus na/ rang byung ye shes de nyid mthong zhes bya.

The above true seeing of Dzogchen, gNubs chen warns however, should not be done intentionally; he explains,

> When connected with these principles, if the seeing is done intentionally, it then deviates from both the tantras and the authoritative scriptures. For, it has the fault of not understanding its very own nature. So, in this great system [of Dzogchen], seeing the meaning is not done intentionally. Everything is due to the great being. Though not sought, it is the supreme eye that self-illuminates itself without being seen. This meaning is ultimately expressed as the sole intention of the Majestic Ones.[34]

Thus, in Dzogchen practice, one's own spontaneous presence is not only the fruition but also the means of its own illumination. This is one's own self-radiance. Even one iota of intentionality is incompatible with this spontaneity, including the intention of trying to see the ultimate truth. As gNubs chen himself has insightfully pointed out before, as long as there is one (*i.e.*, some trace of intention, no matter how little it is), there will be another one (*i.e.*, more intention to arise).

As a vehicle of effortless non-action, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes explains to his audience, Dzogchen is the antidote to making effort or exertion (Tib. *rtsol ba*) that, by definition, involves intention. With its spontaneous presence, Dzogchen is really the mother who gives birth to all Buddhas. This firm conviction even allows him to write, "Whatever method or path one takes, without realizing this [teaching of Great Perfection], one will not attain Buddhahood."[35] All lower vehicles up to Anuyoga, he emphatically states, do not see the meaning of suchness, because they are unable to be free from making effort. With this remark, gNubs chen not only informs us how deeply we are

[34] Ibid, 310.4-311.1; don de dag dang sbyar na/ mthong ba ched du byed na/ rgyud lung gnyis su gol de/ bdag nyid du ma shes pa'i skyon yod pas chos lugs chen po 'dir don mthong ba ched du byar med pa nyid kyi phyir/ thams cad bdag nyid chen po pas/ ma btsal yang mthong ba med par rang gsal ba nyid spyan gyi mchog yin pas/ don de ni rgyal ba'i dgongs pa mngon du phyung ba kho na'o.

[35] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 312.3-312.4; thabs dang lam gang nas bsgrubs kyang/ 'di ma rtogs par sangs mi rgya.

entangled in the idea of contrived effort, but also, by contrast, shows that how subtle the principle of effortless non-action can be.

Consequently, gNubs chen urges his audience to recognize the fault of contrived effort and closely follow the effortless principle. He thus explains metaphorically that the effect of making effort is like that of a disturbance that makes an ocean muddy and rough with waves. Just as the way to restore the original tranquility of the ocean is to let go of the disturbance, the way to re-assume one's original perfection is to stop making exertion and find recourse in the practice of effortless non-action. Accordingly, gNubs chen proclaims that the original Buddha (Tib. *phyi mo'i sangs rgyas*) manifests only in the spontaneous presence of non-seeking (Tib. *ma btsal ba*), a synonym of effortless non-action.[36] And, this spontaneous non-seeking arises from the primordial basis, the awakened mind. So, he cites the *rMad du byung ba* to tell us:

> Even Vajrasattva himself re-assumes his Buddhahood on the vajra seat through the miraculous awakened mind.[37]

Being the primordial basis, our awakened minds inform, or in-spirit, us that we are original Buddhas. On the fruitional path of Dzogchen, we re-assume our original Buddhahood (Tib. *yang sangs rgyas*) rather than become new Buddhas (Tib. *sangs rgyas gsar ba*). With the support of the scriptures gNubs chen declares that this is the only path to Buddhahood. He quotes the *rMad du byung ba* again telling us,

> … There is no other beneficial medicine [than the awakened mind]. When realizing the meaning of awakened mind, there will be no cause for the phenomenon of cyclic existence. Then, immediately, all will attain awakening.[38]

36 See Ibid, 312.5-313.2.

37 Ibid, 313.4-313.5; rmad du byung ba las/ rmad byung byang chub sems 'di yis/ rdo rje sems dpa' bdag nyid kyang/ rdo rje gtan la yang sangs rgyas/ zhes 'byung.

38 Ibid, 314.5-314.6; phan pa'i sman ni gzhan med de/ byang chub sems kyi don rig na/ 'khor ba'i chos ni

But, to attain this immediate awakening, gNubs chen advises, sentient beings must escape the "dungeon of making efforts" (Tib. *rtsol grub kyi khri mun*). Otherwise, they will not have the opportunity to "dry up the ocean of saṃsāra" (Tib. *'khor ba'i rgya mtsho bskams pa*), not to mention to rejoice in nirvāṇic bliss. On the fruitional path of Dzogchen, all practitioners must give up adventitious efforts and take refuge in their own original perfection that only comes forth when one does not create something that needs no creation (Tib. *ma bkodpar bkodpa*). In the direct perception of one's open awareness, one embraces the whole that has no beginning or end. After all, a fruitional path like Dzogchen, I believe, is telling its practitioner to recognize that the journey to home is that no matter where one is, one is always home; it is a distance-less journey, what Anne C. Klein and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche have poetically called, "a dynamic stillness,"[39] which, I would say, also vividly captures in essence the Dzogchen logic of immediacy in contemplation I have attempted to extract from gNubs chen's introductory as well as synoptic teachings of Dzogchen presented above.

II. The Various Principles of Dzogchen

After the above introductory exposition illustrating the spontaneously perfect reality

rgyu med de/ myur dub yang chub kun gyis thob.

[39] In their *Unbounded Wholeness*, on the logic of a fruitional path like Dzogchen, Anne C. Klein and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche insightfully write, "Dzogchen often states that the path is the goal and that both are reality. The goal, being self-authenticating, bestows this authenticity also on what is designated as 'path.' The practitioner, after all, is only on the path in the sense that she is already in full possession of the goal she erroneously feels the need to seek. Although this is not necessarily impeccable logic, it is a convincing and galvanizing metaphor. In other words, it is religiously affective language, strengthened by reasoned statements without being utterly beholden to them:

> The basis of both Buddhas and sentient beings is the great self-arisen primordial wisdom, enlightenment mind; therefore, sentient beings are the cause of Buddhas and Buddhas are the cause of sentient beings. Hence one speaks of 'the Buddha wherein cause and effect are of one taste.'

Thus, cause and effect, sentient beings and Buddhas, subjects and objects, path and goal are ultimately revealed to be of one taste: Movement from one to the other is no movement at all, really, but a dynamic stillness." (Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, 48).

of Dzogchen and its fruitional path, gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes goes on in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* to further present nine different teachings, or more precisely views (Tib. *lta ba*), propounded by both Indian and Tibetan masters. Categorically different from the nine vehicles (Tib. *theg pa rim pa dgu*) in the Nyingma doxography briefly discussed in Chapter 3, these nine views represent the different aspects of the highest vehicle, Dzogchen, in the doxography. Just as gNubs chen has stated, there is not even an iota more than one Dzogchen reality, but, due to the different capacities of ordinary people and the different skillful means of the teachers, these different views illustrate the dynamic display (Tib. *rtsal*) of the primordial basis. Be that as it may, they all reveal the same essence (Tib. *ngo bo 'dra ba*). In gNubs chen's words, it is said,

> Generally speaking, there is just simply one. However, it [i.e., that one] is beyond ordinary thinking. At times, there have been different approaches and expositions given by different spiritual teachers, some of which are shown here. With respect to these different perspectives, whatever systems they teach, they are of the same essence.[40]

Particularly, the principles expressed by the nine perspectives or views are: (1) the view that takes "non-referentiality" (Tib. *gza' gtad dang bral ba*) as the main principle, (2) the view that takes "spontaneous presence" (Tib. *lhun gyis grub pa*) as the main principle, (3) the view that takes "great being" (Tib. *bdag nyid chen po*) as the main principle, (4) the view that takes "self-arisen primordial wisdom" (Tib. *rang byung gi ye shes*) as the main principle, (5) the view that takes "effortless non-action" (Tib. *bya btsal dang bral ba*) as the main principle, (6) the view that takes "great bliss" (Tib. *bde ba chen po*) as the main principle, (7) the view that takes "nonduality" (Tib. *gnyis su med pa*) as the main

[40] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 315.1-315.5; de ni spyir gcig las kyang med/ bsam las kyang 'das na/ re zhig dge ba'i bshes gnyen gyi bzhed gzhung 'ga' 'dir bstan te/ lugs mi mthun pa ni/ ji skad bstan kyang ngo bo 'dra ba la.

principle, (8) the view that takes "great wholeness" (Tib. *thig le chen po*) as the main principle, and (9) the view that takes "the-basis-of-all-existence-just-as-it-is" (Tib. *chos thams cad gzhi ji bzhin pa*)[41] as the main principle.

As it is neither my intention nor a practically feasible task to present these nine teachings in detail in the remaining pages of the chapter, I will however follow gNubs chen's presentation as closely as possible to give a summary of each teaching. These summaries are intended not only to enhance our earlier discussion that highlights the spontaneity and fruitional path of Dzogchen reality but also to offer us other important characteristics of Dzogchen so as to facilitate our understanding of Dzogchen as a whole. In the process, it is also hoped that with the contribution from the Dzogchen teachings of non-conceptuality, spontaneous presence, self-arisen primordial wisdom, effortlessness, nonduality, and wholeness, we will come to a deeper and fuller understanding of the logic of immediacy in contemplation, in addition to what we have learned from the teachings of Chan and sTon mun.

A. The View That Takes Non-Referentiality as Principle

This first view, according to a note in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, is taught by Vimalamitra and O rgyan Mahāratsa (or Mahārāja of Oḍḍiyāna). We don't know much about O rgyan Mahāratsa,[42] but Vimalamitra has been positively recognized, along with Padmasambhava and Vairocana, as one of the first three masters who brought the

[41] This view is first named "the view of the great naturalness that transcends all extremes" (Tib. *mtha' ril ma spangs bral ba'i rang lugs chen por lta ba*; gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 316.2-316.3), but in the main body where it is explained, gNubs chen calls it "the view as "the-basis-of-all-existence-just-as-it-is" (Tib. *chos thams cad gzhi ji bzhin par lta ba;* gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 375.5-375.6).

[42] His name is found among the early masters holding the lineages of Atiyoga transmissions. See *e.g.*, Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 19-21.

teachings of Dzogchen to Tibet in the end of the 8th century.[43] Essentially, this Dzogchen view emphasizes the non-intentional or non-conceptual nature of reality, for the reality is primordially devoid of any referentiality or reference points (Tib. *gza' gtad*). Specifically, gNubs chen succinctly explains the view with the following words:

> The unmistaken meaning is: Buddhas, sentient beings, saṃsāra, and nirvāṇa all are just designations. [Their] essences appear to be in diversity but do not abide. The entire domain of experience of self-arisen primordial wisdom is free of [the need for] purification due to its very nature. It is not to make awakening an aim, as to find it at the outside, or to make the realization of the meaning a fixed concept, as to desire it in the activity of [intellectual] elucidation. How can this one [Dzogchen] nature have any fixed reference points? It is not that this [Dzogchen principle] arises by removing fixed reference points. From the very beginning, there have never been any reference points, not even their designated names. Rather, this very meaning itself is just one's [great] being. [However,] it is not to be sought intentionally. It is like the sun would not seek the light of the firebug.[44]

Here, three points should be worth of recapitulating to facilitate our understanding of the above densely packed passage. First, even though things have different names and appear to be in diversity, their essences (Tib. *ngo bo*) are, in fact, non-abiding, and due to this non-abiding nature, nothing is fixed. Therefore, from the very beginning of the path, Dzogchen practitioners should not conceptually fixate upon anything. This contemplative idea of non-fixation, evidently similar to the Chan and sTon mun ideas of non-reification (Ch. *wusuode* 無所得; Tib. *dmigs su med pa*) and non-abidance (Ch. *wuzhu* 無住; Tib.

[43] For an account of Vimalamitra's life story, see *e.g.*, Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 68-73. For the role Vimalamitra may have played in the early history of Nyingma transmissions, see, *e.g.*, Germano, "The Seven Descents and the Early History of Rnying Ma Transmissions," 241-248.

[44] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 316.4-317.3; don ma nor ba ni/ sangs rgyas sems can 'khor ba dang mya ngan las 'das pa ril kyang tha snyad kyi bla dvags stam ste/ngo bo sna tshogs snang la gnas pa med pa/ rang byung ba'i ye shes kyi spyod yul thams cad ngang nyid kyis ma bsal bral ba la/ byang chub logs shig nas gnyer bar bya ba'i bza' ba dang/ don rig pas gsal byar 'dod pa'i gza' ba'ang med pas/ gcig gi rang bzhin la dmigs gtad ga la yod de med do/ 'di ni gza' gtad gsal ba las byung ba ma yin te/ ye nyid gza' gtad med de zhes bya ba'i ming tsam du yang bsnyad du med pa la don de nyid kyang bdag yin pas/ ched du gnyer du med de/ dper na nyi mas srin bu'i 'od mi tshol ba dang 'dra'o. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 113.

gnas med pa), is the basic Dzogchen meaning of non-referentiality, whose Tibetan *gza' gtad dang bral ba* could also be rendered as "free from all conceptions," "free from reference points," or "free from conceptual fixation."

Yet, why is the reality free from all conceptions? Does one realize this reality by removing all conceptual reference points? Vimalamitra and Mahārāja, gNubs chen tells us, teach that because it is the nature of reality itself, there have been no conceptual reference points from the very beginning. gNubs chen characterizes this reality as "the entire domain of experience of self-arisen primordial wisdom" (Tib. *rang byung ba'i ye shes kyi spyod yul thams cad*) that is undefiled *due to its very nature* (Tib. *ngang nyid kyis*). Hence, the reality needs no purification; it is originally perfect. And, in this way, the idea of "non-referentiality" or "free from conceptual fixation" is actually a synonym of spontaneous perfection (Tib. *lhun rdzogs*) or spontaneous presence (Tib. *lhun gyis grub* pa). Given this Dzogchen understanding that integrates non-referentiality (or non-conceptuality) with spontaneity, not only do we come to better appreciate gNubs chen's characterization of Dzogchen as a vehicle of spontaneous non-conceptuality (Tib. *lhun gyis grub pa'i mi rtog pa*), but, I would argue, it also gives us a vantage point to see how the idea of immediacy is spontaneous in terms devoid of any referentiality. In other words, one does not intentionally aim for anything, but must simply be without any reference to limit the openness of one's being.

Yet, the idea of "without reference" does not mean without guidance. The intention is that, if the nature of reality is free from conceptual fixation, the practitioner then cannot make the fruition of awakening an intentional aim of his/her spiritual cultivation, for the idea of aiming, no matter if it is gradual, sudden, or nondual, always involves fixation.

Accordingly, the fruition must be neither something to be sought intentionally nor a fixed concept to be intellectually understood. Rather, it is realized through an artful endeavor predicated on the original perfection of oneself, the fruition itself, that manifests in the spontaneous presence of one's self-arisen primordial wisdom. Given this idea of original perfection that is like the sun, as gNubs chen characterizes, why would anyone then need to seek other sources of light, for compared to the sun other sources are nothing more than lightning bugs?

To further expound the practice of non-referentiality,[45] gNubs chen cites scriptures, emphasizing that for one to thoroughly understand the meaning of non-referentiality, one deeply delves into the idea of effortlessness, through the power of which one liberates oneself from the domain of objective or conceptual experience. This self-liberation comes from the fact that in reality everything is subsumed in the awakened mind. With this awakened, or more precisely awake, nature, how can there be any reference points for conceptual fixation? If one does not see this non-conceptualization and tries to realize awakening via fixation, it is like the blind looking for darkness, unable to see that the fruition is just oneself, or like a wild animal chasing after a mirage, unable to realize that the chase will bring nothing but exhaustion. In this way, one must understand that there is no awakening in the desire for awakening; similarly, there is no immediacy in the desire for immediacy, because any fixation is delusional and deceptive.[46] Thus, similar to the Chan/sTon mun practices of non-reification and non-abidance, the practice of effortless non-fixation is how the Dzogchen principle of non-referentiality, in essence, embodies

[45] The paragraph is written based on the material presented in gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 317.3-320.1.

[46] So, the Victorious Samantabhadra has taught, "The natural, uncontrived awakened mind itself has no meditation in connection with conceptual fixation." (ji bzhin ma bcos byang chub sems nyid la/ gza' gtad bcas nas bsgom du med pa ni; gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 319.5-319.6).

the logic of immediacy in contemplation.

B. The View That Takes Spontaneous Presence as Principle

The second Dzogchen view gNubs chen introduces in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* is taught by dGa' rab rdo rje, who, according to the Nyingma tradition, received Dzogchen teachings from Vajrasattva and Vajrapāṇi in person and became the first human awareness- or knowledge-holder (Skt. *vidyādhara*; Tib. *rig 'dzin*) in the lineage.[47] Based on gNubs chen's report, synoptically, dGa' rab rdo rje teaches that the nature of reality, including all beings, is the state of enlightenment (Tib. *sangs rgyas*) itself, and one simply manifests in spontaneous presence to realize it. gNubs chen characterizes the teachings with the following words:

> The unmistaken meaning is: The nature of the entire domain of experience, from [that of] Buddhas to [that of] sentient beings, is the state of enlightenment itself, which is the all-inclusive nature of the great state, the spontaneously perfect nature of things [*i.e.*, *dharmatā*], that has neither beginning nor end. If someone asks what the defining characteristic of this is, metaphorically, it is like the precious wish-fulfilling jewel, in which ... whatever exists, when examined and shown, is difficult to speak of, but appears as whatever one needs and desires.[48]

To further explain the "wish-fulfilling jewel" of spontaneous presence, gNubs chen, after citing a few scriptural quotations, adds the following characterization; he writes,

> Even though the meaning of this [great] state cannot be defined, everything is pervaded by it but without being enslaved. It is difficult

[47] For a biography of dGa' rab rdo rje (Prahevajra in Sanskrit), see Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 55-58.

[48] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 320.1-320.6; don ma nor ba ni/ sangs rgyas dang/ sems can dang/ de'i spyod yul ril gyi rang bzhin nyid ni*/ yong ye gdod ma med pa nas tha ma med par lhun gyis grub pa'i chos nyid ngang chen po'i rang bzhin du lhag ma med par sangs rgyas so/ de'i mtshan nyid ci 'dra zhe na/ dpe yid bzhin gyi nor bur in po che la ... (320.5) so so na yod ces brtag cing bstan pa'ang/ smra bar yang dka' na/ dgos 'dod cir yang snang ngo. * The original has *ni ngo bo nyid ni*, which, from the context, is redundant and thus edited to be *nyid ni*. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 114.

> to touch it with an ordinary mind, but whatever things co-arise are, in fact, not one. For this reason, it is called "the [great] state of spontaneous presence."[49]

Accordingly, in this teaching, due to its own nature, whatever exists in reality, even though being inexpressible, manifests itself continuously with the great blessing that is the state of spontaneous presence. This state pervades everything but does not "enslave" anything by fixing them into a monistic unity. They still enjoy diversity in the great state of spontaneous presence. As it is said, they appear "as whatever one needs and desires," but sentient beings who operate with ordinary minds (Tib. *blo*) will not be able to understand it.

So how does one understand this Dzogchen principle of spontaneous presence? dGa' rab rdo rje, according to gNubs chen, teaches us to realize this principle using "the method of non-realization" (Tib. *rtogs par byar med pa'i tshul*) or "the method of no awareness" (Tib. *rig pa med pa'i tshul*), for reality is just as such from the beginning.[50] Similar to those in Chan and sTon mun, these "negative paths" should not be taken as trying to negate or exclude something. Rather, they are to contemplatively lead the practitioner to directly and artfully tap into the reality of spontaneous presence by letting go of the urge or compulsion to realize (Tib. *rtogs pa*) or cognize (Tib. *rig pa*) such a spontaneous reality. In the spirit of spontaneity, when there is not even a single shred of urge or compulsion, what is left is just the display of natural dynamics in their complete openness and unmediated immediacy. That, I think, is fundamentally the way in which the aroma of spontaneous presence tinges the logic of immediacy in contemplation.

[49] Ibid, 323.1-323.2; ngang gi don ni mtshan nyid kyang bstan du med pa/ thams cad kyang ma bkol bar khyas pa'o/ blo reg dka' ba/ gang dang yang lhan mi gcig pa'o/ de'i phyir lhun gyis grub pa'i ngang zhes bla dags su brjod do.

[50] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 326.2-326.4.

To further bring to light the unquestioned necessity of spontaneous presence, gNubs chen plays the role of an interlocutor, challenging, "Even if the [primordial] basis is like that [*i.e.*, in the great state of spontaneous presence], there are no benefits [if one practices like that and does not learn other skillful means.] The skillful means of performing practices have wholesome instructions which can be taken as a supporting object."[51] To that, gNubs chen unequivocally states that the instructions given as a grasping support (Tib. *dmigs 'dzin gyi man ngag*) deviate from the intent (Tib. *re ba*) or message of spontaneous presence, because from the very beginning there is only the great method of spontaneous presence, with respect to which practices that strive for fruition are not considered great.[52] Here, one may get the impression that gNubs chen does leave some room for other practices, even though they may not be "great methods" (Tib. *thabs chen*). But one may also be dumbfounded by how he adamantly underscores the idea of spontaneous presence and how this great state is intricately nuanced, especially when one contrasts it with the necessity of some "skillful effort" for the practitioner to take the path. Nonetheless, in conforming to gNubs chen's spontaneous teaching, this "skillful effort" should not be taken as a grasping support or effort to strive for fruition but simply as something artfully employed within the context of spontaneous presence.

C. The View That Takes Great Being as Principle

According to the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, this third view, which takes great nature or being (Tib. *bdag nyid chen po*) as the principle, is taught by Vairocana, who has been known as a great lo-tsā-ba (translator), one of Padmasambhava's twenty-five prominent

[51] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 328.1; de ltar yin yang gzhi la thal bas phan med de/ nyams su blangs pa'i thabs dmigs pa'i man ngag bde po yod.
[52] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 328.2-328.4.

disciples, and one of the first three masters introducing Dzogchen to Tibet.[53] Concerning this Vairocana's teaching, gNubs chen succinctly states:

> If one asks its unmistaken meaning, it is: All phenomena, without exception, that comprise oneself and others and all those that appear as "I" and "mine" are neither altered nor corrupted. From the very beginning, they are naturally clear to the nature of one's open awareness, the non-abiding primordial wisdom. This is designated as "great being." However, one is not to be hindered by this designation, for one is to go beyond the designation that is expressed in words and letters.[54]

Thus, being unaltered and uncorrupted, all things from the very beginning are just as they are, *i.e.*, spontaneously present in their original perfection. This spontaneous presence is just the self-manifestation of oneself. As such, all phenomena, gNubs chen characterizes, is "naturally clear to the nature of one's open awareness, the non-abiding primordial wisdom." This self-appearing and self-clear reality is called the great being of oneself. In the realm of this great being, all other phenomena simply subside without being employed (Tib. *ma bkol ba*). So, gNubs chen cites the *sPyi bcings* to further support this idea: "There is the self. There are no others. There is [just] the great being of oneself in spontaneous presence. In the realm of All Good Samantabhadra, there is the singular but no others."[55] As a result, one abandons the fixation on the appearances of self and others, for the great I that is without the I (Tib. *nga med pa'i nga chen po*) is the

[53] For a biography of Vairocana, see *e.g.*, Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 17-37 and Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 102-105. For the role Vairocana may have played in the early history of Nyingma transmissions, see, *e.g*., Germano, "The Seven Descents and the Early History of Rnying Ma Transmissions," 238-241.

[54] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 328.6-329.3; don ma nor ba ni gang zhe na/ bdag dang gzhan gyis bsdus pa'i chos ma lus pa dang/ bdag dang bdag tu snang ba thams cad/ ma bsgyur ma slad par ye nas rang rig pa mi gnas pa'i ye shes kyi bdag nyid du rang gsal ba la bdag nyid chen po zhes bya ba'i tha snyad kyis kyang mi thogs te/ yi tshig dang yi ges brjod pa'i tha snyad las 'das so. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 114.

[55] Ibid, 329.5-329.6; bdag ni yod do/ gzhan ni med do/ bdag nyid* chen po lhun gyis grub pas yod do/ kun tu bzang po'i ngang du gcig pas gzhan med. * The original has *gzhan*, which means others. But from the context, I have changed it to *nyid* to make the teaching coherent.

great being in its spontaneous presence beyond all appearances, words and letters.

In addition, according to gNubs chen, Vairocana teaches that it is not that there are first others and then they are subsumed into the great being of oneself. Simply, there is only the great being to begin with.[56] Thus, in this perspective of Dzogchen teachings, the path and fruition (Tib. *lam dang 'bras bu*) are no different from the primordial wisdom that is the nature of the great being.[57] In this great being, not only is there no I, for this "I" is the *tomb* (Tib. *dur*) of all Buddhas,[58] but there should not be any intention of making effort to attain Buddhahood, either, for Buddha is just oneself (Tib. *sangs rgyas bdag yin pa*). If one wishes (Tib. *re ba*) it from others, there will never be the time of achievement (Tib. *rnyed pa*).[59] In this way, similar to the Chan/sTon mun idea of directly seeing into one's nature, the Vairocana teaching of seeking from no others but directly in one's own great being informs us of another practical mechanism about how the logic of immediacy works in contemplation.

D. The View That Takes Self-Arisen Primordial Wisdom as Principle

This fourth view, which takes self-arisen primordial wisdom (Tib. *rang byung gi ye shes*) as the principle of Dzogchen, is taught by a relatively obscure master, dGe slong ma (Bhikṣuṇī) Kun dga' ma, the only female among the early Dzogchen teachers gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes introduces.[60] According to gNubs chen, she teaches,

> The approach, which is the view of self-arisen primordial wisdom, is that all phenomena that arise and perish, from the very beginning, are [in] the state of enlightenment. While this state of enlightenment is

[56] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 331.2.
[57] See Ibid, 331.5.
[58] See Ibid, 332.5.
[59] See Ibid, 339.5.
[60] Her name is indeed found among the early masters holding the lineages of Atiyoga transmissions. See *e.g.*, Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 19-21.

> the essence of self-arisen primordial wisdom intrinsically free from causes and conditions, all the phenomena are inherently lucid to the great [self-arisen] primordial wisdom like the light of the sky without outside or inside.[61]

So, in this particular view, the main principle is one's self-arisen primordial wisdom that, being self-arisen (or born of oneself), is free from all causes and conditions. In this all-inclusive sphere of self-arisen primordial wisdom, all existence in the universe, objects and beings, are already enlightened. Thus, they shine naturally like the light in the sky. In this natural illumination, what things need to be grasped? What efforts need to be made? From the very beginning, one's great self-arisen primordial wisdom, while transcending the entire domain of experience (Tib. *spyod yul*), suffuses all existence with its enlightening essence. Having the same essence, why would one then arouse grasping thought with respect to them? It is as though the sky would try to grasp itself.[62]

One may wonder that if self-arisen primordial wisdom is naturally free from causes and conditions, then how is the teaching of dependent arising (Tib. *rten 'brel*), considered to be synonymous with the ultimate reality of emptiness (Tib. *stong pa nyid*) in Buddhist schools like Madhyamaka, seen in the system of Dzogchen? To that, gNubs chen does not give any direct answer, but he does imply one with the following:

> When understanding the essence of causes and condition, one would not abandon causes and conditions themselves, even though they are like the light rays versus the sun in comparison to self-arisen primordial wisdom. Whatever arises from causes and conditions, because [its] essence is non-arising whatsoever, is the *vajra* wisdom.[63]

[61] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 340.3-340.5; rang byung gi ye shes su lta ba'i lugs ni skye 'jig gis bsdud pa'i chos thams cad kyang gdod ma nas rang byung gi ye shes rgyu rkyen ngang gis bral ba'i ngo bor sangs rgyas pa'i phyi nang med par nam mkha'i 'od bzhin ye shes chen por rang gsal lo. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 114-115.

[62] See also gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 340.5-341.2.

[63] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 342.2-342.4; rgyu rkyen gyi ngo bo nyid rtogs

Here, it should be clear that dependent arising is considered to be secondary to self-arisen primordial wisdom. As the analogy tells us, it is the "light rays" (Tib. *zer*) coming from the sun of self-arisen primordial wisdom. Be that as it may, one should not (and cannot) abandon causes and conditions. Rather, one should utilize and understand them to be of one essence with the self-arisen primordial wisdom that is utterly free from other causes and conditions, and arises solely from oneself. Having this understanding, one then suffuses whatever arises from causes and conditions with one's *vajra* wisdom, a synonym of self-arisen primordial wisdom.

Nonetheless, given the centrality of self-arisen primordial wisdom in the teaching of dGe slong ma Kun dga' ma, gNubs chen unwaveringly warns his audience that there should be no striving for its realization or manifestation. To do so would be like using one's self-arisen primordial wisdom to search for itself, which is absurdly like the medicine itself aspiring for a doctor.[64] In the spirit of self-arising, one spontaneously presents one's primordial wisdom in dynamic display as it manifests in the various forms of causes and conditions.[65] Being so, self-arising not only dictates the dynamic display of spontaneous presence but also determines the logic of immediacy in contemplation, as all phenomena that arise and perish are inherently transparent to one's self-arisen primordial wisdom.

E. The View That Takes Effortless Non-Action as Principle

The Indian Paṇḍita Buddhagupta is said to have taught this view. According to the

dang rgyu rkyen nyid nyi ma dang zer bzhin rang byung ye shes pas spang du med/ rgyu rkyen las skyes so/ de tsam ngo bo nyid gang du yang skyes pa med pas ye shes rdo rje.

64 See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 344.2.

65 For a more detailed discussion on the relationship between spontaneous presence and dependent arising, see Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, 119-136.

Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, Buddhagupta was one of the early twenty-three Dzogchen masters recorded in the *Vairo 'dra 'bag* (*The Resemblance of Vairocana*),[66] and it has been suggested that this Buddhagupta (Sangs rgya sbas pa in Tibetan) is the same as another famous tantric master, Buddhaguhya (Sangs rgyas gsang ba in Tibetan).[67] Generally speaking, gNubs chen reports this view given by Buddhagupta to emphasize that everything is already in the state of completeness (Tib. *zin pa*). In completeness, there is nothing to search or strive for. Instead, one should remain in effortless non-action (Tib. *bya btsal dang bral ba*) to enjoy the original perfection of all existence. gNubs chen describes this principle as follows.

> What is accepted as effortless non-action is taught like this: In the system of the great unsurpassable yoga, the world is an uncontrived palace. The six kinds of sentient beings, through the light of self-arisen *vajra*, are already enlightened. The three realms are in themselves the nature of Buddha-body, Buddha-speech and Buddha-mind. Afflictions are sowed and carried as the nature of phenomena. Suffering spontaneously presents [itself] as the great bliss. Obscuration shines itself as primordial wisdom. Birth and death is of everlasting nature without old age, decay or change and in the state of enlightenment from the beginning. Thus, what is there to search for?[68]

With respect to the above controversial equivalence of opposite categories like sentient being and Buddha, suffering and bliss, or obscuration and wisdom, gNubs chen does not spend any effort trying to clarify it. Rather, he gives twenty examples to justify

[66] A hagiography of Vairocana, the *Vairo 'dra 'bag* is said to be composed in either the 11[th] or the 13[th] century. For a summary of its content, see Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 18-31.

[67] See Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 61-63. For the role Buddhaguhya has played in the early history of Nyingma transmissions, see, *e.g.*, Germano, "The Seven Descents and the Early History of Rnying Ma Transmissions," 229-232 and Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, 446-450.

[68] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 344.4-345.2; bya btsal dang bral bar 'dod pa'ang 'di ltar bzhed de/ lhag pa'i rnal 'byor chen po'i lugs kyis/ snod kyi 'jig rten ma bcos pa'i gzhal yas khang/ bcud kyi 'jig rten 'gro drug rang byung rdo rje 'od kyis sangs rgyas/ khams gsum sku gsung thugs kyi bdag nyid la/ nyon mongs pa chos nyid du bskyal btab/ sdug bsngal bde ba chen por lhun gyis grub/ sgrib pa ye shes su rang 'bar/ skye shi g.yung drung tsher gyur/ rgas rgud 'pho 'gyur med pa'i ngo bor ye sangs rgyas pa la/ de 'phral du btsal du ji yod. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 115.

the perfect completeness in all things, which he means to further illustrate Buddhagupta's teaching of effortless non-action.[69] Among them, gNubs chen states that "Because of spontaneous perfection, all other meanings without exception have been accomplished."[70] Accordingly, what is the need of striving? Here, to validate this position, gNubs chen again cites from early tantric scriptures, evidently a major source for his presentation. Particularly, he gives a quotation from one of the eighteen root texts in the Mind Series (Tib. *sems sde*) of the Dzogchen tradition,[71] the *Rig pa'i khu byug* (*The Cuckoo of Open Awareness*),[72] saying, "Abandon the illness of striving, for everything is already completed."[73]

Although striving or making effort will not bring one to awakening, laxity surely is not the answer either. To make sure that his audience would not misunderstand, gNubs chen reports that in this teaching of Buddhagupta,

> even though meritorious and striving actions are faulty, if abandoned, how could one not give up the world [as well]? If one asks why, it is because, in this great teaching, effortless non-action does not mean that one should abandon everything nor should one strive for anything intentionally. [Rather,] one stays with the principle without any effort. If one understands in this way, one does not stop whatever one does nor is there any cause for striving. Moreover, in this great teaching of the ancients' practice, not one thing is either abandoned or accepted. Even the implication of effortless non-action is neither to be aspired for nor to be separated from. Those who are fortunate enough to practice this religious tradition in the future must know it accordingly. It is called the manner of laying down the great principle. One *sleeps* naturally within the basic space of phenomenal reality

[69] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 345.2-347.1.
[70] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 346.1; lhun gyis rdzogs pas/ don gzhan du ma lus pas/ bsgrub pa byas zin.
[71] For more information on the three series, namely, Mind Series, Space Series, and Esoteric Precept Series, of the Dzogchen tradition, see footnote 20 above.
[72] For a study of this text, see Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 41-59.
[73] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 347.4; zin pas rtsol ba'i nad spang te.

without losing the king of awareness.[74] (Emphasis added.)

So, as discussed previously in Section I, effortless non-action is the antidote to effort or striving for something intentionally. As one lets go of that compulsion, one should not fall into the other extreme of laxity, but remain effortlessly within the principle of spontaneous presence. In the principle of spontaneity, one should also understand that even effortless non-action is not to be aspired for intentionally. Precisely, one only remains aware in the direct perception or spontaneous presence of one's open awareness. This tranquil balance, as gNubs chen colorfully characterizes, is that one *sleeps* in resonance with the nature of reality to cease all intentionality while not losing the king of awareness, one's open awareness, to directly perceive and interact with all that occurs. Here, in relation to the idea of immediacy, the delicacy of effortless non-action in terms of a natural sleep in one's open awareness signifies that a contemplative immediacy not only requires a transcendence of all things "awake," for they disturb effortlessness and thus make immediacy mediated, but also demands an artful continuation of one's open awareness to keep oneself in continuous "sleep," thus maintaining the logic of immediacy.

Last but not least, we earlier identified that one of the reasons gNubs chen composes the *bSam gtan mig sgron* is to clarify some tantric practitioners' mistaking sTon mun to be Dzogchen. One of the confusing points centers on the idea of effortless non-action, as

[74] Ibid, 351.2-352.1; dge ba dang rtsol ba'i bya ba yang skyon no zhes bya na/ yal bar 'dor bar tang ga la srid de mi 'dor ro/ de ci'i phyir zhe na/ lugs chen po bya ba dang bral ba ni/ yal bar bor ba min/ ched du rtsol ba yang min/ don dang bral ba med par/ brtsol ba med pa'o/ de ltar shes na ci byas kyang mi 'gog ste bya brtsal gyi rgyu yang med do/ 'on tang gna'i mi lugs chen po spyod pa ni/ gang la yang 'dor ba'ang med/ len pa'ang med/ tha na bya bral gyi don nyid gnyer ba'ang mi byed/ bral ba'ang mi byed do/ de bzhin phyi nas chos lugs spyod pa'i skal ldan rnams kyang byos shig/ de ni don chen nyal mo'i tshul zhes bya ste/ chos kyi dbyings kyi ngang la rig pa'i rgyal po mi 'dor bar mnal ba'o. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 116-117.

both traditions have taught this practice. However, for gNubs chen, because sTon mun practitioners aim directly at the ultimate truth, their non-action is done with the intention of "purposefully striving for something" (Tib. *rtsol ba ched du gnyer*). This purposeful striving, consequently for gNubs chen, not only makes sTon mun inferior to Dzogchen but also causes its practitioners to be "distracted and carried away by the river of striving" (Tib. *rtsol ba'i chu bo rgyun phyogs su khyer te g.yengs pa*), thus preventing the Simultaneists of sTon mun from seeing the reality of spontaneous presence.[75] However, my alternative interpretation in the previous chapter presents a much deeper similarity between sTon mun and Dzogchen and, as a result, amends gNubs chen's above criticism. Nonetheless, gNubs chen, by contrasting Dzogchen with his understanding of sTon mun, effectively conveys the message that the Dzogchen practice of effortless non-action must be performed in complete accord of spontaneity, for any bit of striving distracts and deviates the practitioner from seeing the true face of one's spontaneous nature.

F. The View That Takes Great Bliss as Principle

It is said that Kukurāja and Śrī Siṃha taught the view that takes great bliss (Tib. *bde ba chen po*) as the main principle of Dzogchen. While Kukurāja is a relatively unknown

[75] Specifically, to distinguish the non-action of sTon mun from that of Dzogchen, gNubs chen writes,

> Those, whose intelligence for understanding this principle has subsided and who are distracted and carried away by the river of striving, are like a person born blind. They accept the teaching of Dzogchen and talk about effortless non-action, yet inside they are purposefully striving for something. To search for the meaning of effortless non-action by its meaning itself is like a woman who wishes to be loved by dancing around. (*bSam gtan mig sgron*, 352.2-352.4; de dag gi don rig pa'i ye shes ni nub/ rtsol ba'i chu bo rgyun phyogs su khyer te g.yengs pa yi/ mun long dang 'dra ba'i gang zag/ rdzogs chen khas len pa'i rab gcig/ rtsol med kyi tshig smra zhing khong rtsol ba ched du gnyer zhing/ don gyis byar med kyi don bya bas tshol ba ni/ bro brdungs pas thugs zin du re ba'i mi mo dang 'dra'o. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 116-117.)

figure,[76] Śrī Siṃha, who has been said to be originally from China,[77] has been recognized as one of the lineage holders by all transmissions of Dzogchen traditions.[78] Generally, this view of great bliss advocates that, having realized the nature of one's awakened mind as the basis of everything, one experiences all things in the one taste of great bliss that is inexpressible but nominally given the designation of great bliss. In gNubs chen's words, this view of Kukurāja and Śrī Siṃha's is described as follows.

> The approach, which is the view of great bliss, is that the inherent nature of "that" which experiences any and all phenomena comprising actions, afflictions, and their suffering effects, when investigated, is non-existent, because, when left naturally, it [*i.e.*, "that" which experiences] gives rise to everything. In this regard, it is the awakened mind that has no inherent entity from the beginning, and it is the pure space of great bliss. [Therein,] while pain is not abandoned, great bliss self-arises. This "great bliss" is imperishable and inexpressible. Even the ordinary mind is primordially unable to perceive this great bliss. In this way, it [*i.e.*, the great bliss] manifests itself. It cannot be found in others [but only within oneself].[79]

Regarding the above point that great bliss self-arises within oneself, gNubs chen provocatively quotes the *Khyung chen* (*The Great Garuda*) attributed to Śrī Siṃha to

[76] His name is found among the early masters holding the lineages of Atiyoga transmissions; see *e.g.*, Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 19-21. In addition, his name is also found among the masters holding the lineage of Mahāyoga teachings; see, *e.g.*, Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 25-26.

[77] According to modern scholars like David Germano, the association of Śrī Siṃha with China is most likely a fabrication by later Tibetan authors in the twelfth century; Germano writes, "None of these [early] accounts associate Śrīsiṃha with China (*rgya nag*), but instead locate his activities in India itself. The later puzzling association of him with China, which has led some to speculate he was linked to Chinese Central Asia, is most likely a fabrication that may have originated in *snying thig* chronicles in the 12th century, namely the *Lo rgyus chen mo*. The motivation may have been to express the international nature of the early Great Perfection as the quintessence of all Buddhism, and hence both legitimize it as well as divert questions for its low profile in India" (Germano, "The Seven Descents and the Early History of Rnying Ma Transmissions," 239-240).

[78] For these transmissions, see *e.g.*, Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 29-37. For a biography of Śrī Siṃha, see Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 62-64. For an account of his role in the transmission of Dzogchen in Tibet, see Germano, "The Seven Descents and the Early History of Rnying Ma Transmissions," 238-241.

[79] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 352.5-353.3; bde ba chen por lta ba'i lugs kyis ni/ las dang nyon mongs pa dang 'bras bu sdug bsngal gyi bsdus pa'i chos ji snyed/ byed cing myong ba'i rang bzhin nyid/ brtags na med la bzhag na cir yang 'byung ba'i phyir/ de la ngo bo ye med pas byang chub kyi sems bde ba chen po'i klong dag pa/ zug rngu ma spangs bde ba chen po rang shar ba la/ bde ba chen po zhes brjod pa ma 'gags brjod du med pa/ blos kyang bde ba chen po zhes par gzung ba ye bral ba ni 'di ltar snang ba nyid de/ gzhan du btsal du med do. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 117.

indicate that even the five inexpiable transgressions (Tib. *mtshams med lnga*)[80] are the "juice" (Tib. *rtsi*) of completely perfect phenomena, for there is nothing external to, or other than, this great blissful nature.[81] gNubs chen asserts here that if one realizes this essential meaning, one's open awareness will naturally shine as the great bliss.[82] In that way, the light of great bliss will spontaneously illuminate all of saṃsāra. For in the great bliss of one's awakened mind, body, and speech, how could there exist any transgressive actions or thoughts? By whom could such transgressions be committed?[83] In the realms of the great three thousand-fold universe (Tib. *stong gsum gyi stong chen po 'jig rtan gyi khams*), the names of saṃsāra and afflictions do not even exist, for everything is by nature purified (Tib. *sangs*) and perfected (Tib. *rgyas*), and this palace of purity and perfection is just the being of great bliss.[84] Here, one can certainly say that, given the being of great bliss suffuses all, the logic of immediacy in contemplation would also be tinged with a blissful savor.

In addition, gNubs chen tells us, when one does not see the import of great bliss as just one's nature, one generates the desire to purposefully strive for great perfection in the hope of eradicating suffering and obtaining happiness.[85] But, in that way, one turns one's back on this great bliss. This is like searching for the elephant you are riding on. Not only is the effort done in vain, but also there will be no chance for realizing the goal.[86] In this Dzogchen principle of great bliss, the path is once again recognized as the spontaneous presence of the fruition itself; any bit of contrived effort takes one away from this

[80] The five inexpiable transgressions in Buddhism are: (1) patricide, (2) matricide, (3) arhat-cide, (4) creating schism in the saṅgha, and (5) causing a Tathāgata to bleed with evil intent.
[81] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 353.3-353.4.
[82] See Ibid, 353.4-353.5.
[83] See Ibid, 354.2.
[84] See Ibid, 354.5-354.6.
[85] See Ibid, 356.1.
[86] See Ibid, 356.5.

path-less yet blissful journey within oneself. But again, to be free of contrived effort is not the same as to be lax. Rather, "uncontrived effort" is to perform everything in the manner of neither-grasping-nor-relinquishing. In this complete openness, one thus acts spontaneously in accord with the quintessential instructions of one's open awareness and it is only in this spontaneity that one traverses this fruitional and blissful journey within oneself.

G. The View That Takes Nonduality as Principle

The seventh view gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes introduces is Mañjuśrīmitra's teaching that takes nonduality as the main principle of Dzogchen.[87] In the Nyingma tradition, it is said that Mañjuśrīmitra received the teachings of Dzogchen from dGa' rab rdo rje, the first human Dzogchen master, and classified the teachings into three series, namely, the Mind Series (Tib. *sems sde*), the Space Series (Tib. *klong sde*), and the Esoteric Precept Series (Tib. *man ngag sde*).[88] Afterwards, he passed the teachings to Śrī Siṃha of China. According to the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, Mañjuśrīmitra essentially teaches that, with the awakened mind as the blissful and effortless reality of all things, all extremes are naturally nondual. Particularly, gNubs chen begins the presentation of this nonduality view with the following description:

> In the great unsurpassable yoga, the view of nonduality is that the awakened mind, which exists from the very beginning, is the reality of great bliss and effortlessness. As far as this reality is concerned, all known extremes are nondual.[89]

[87] For a description of Mañjuśrīmitra's life, see *e.g.*, Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 59-61.
[88] For more information on these three series, see footnote 20 above.
[89] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 356.5-357.1; lhag pa'i rnal 'byor chen po pas/ gnyis su med par lta ba ni/ ye nas gnas pa'i byang chub sems bde ba chen po rtsol ba dang bral ba'i don ni

To illustrate this nondual reality, gNubs chen further gives fifty some examples.[90] Among them, the first seven examples are translated below to demonstrate his reasoning; he writes,

> When investigating the self-nature of the awakened mind, it is non-existent, but if one reflects, it appears to be everything. Thus, existence and non-existence are nondual. One's true nature is indefinite anywhere yet naturally rests in all enlightened attributes. Thus, permanence and annihilation are nondual. The state of great bliss without extremes transcends all defining characteristics, calculation, and designation. It does not grasp anything whatsoever. Thus, unity and multiplicity are nondual. Similarly, one's open awareness, by nature, appears as anything but does not reify [whatever appears]. Thus, arising and non-arising are nondual. From the very beginning the sun of open awareness, one's self-arisen primordial wisdom, permeates light everywhere without any limitation. Thus, brightness and darkness are nondual. The six realms of sentient beings from the very beginning are in the awakened state of self-arisen *vajra* lights and are free from any designation or labeling. Thus, Buddhas and sentient beings are nondual. From the very beginning the basic space of spontaneously perfect phenomena self-arises as the fruition of the [four] Buddha bodies and the [five] primordial wisdoms. Even the name of fruition is indescribable. Thus, cause and fruition are nondual.[91]

Essentially, the above nondual examples all testify to the idea that the spontaneous nature of the primordial basis that has many names and qualities transcends all extremes while encompassing them as well, and in this non-grasping yet all-encompassing spontaneous perfection, all dualistic extremes, such as being and nonbeing, saṃsāra and

mtha' ji snyed du grags pa thams cad gnyis med de. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 117.

90 See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 357.1-364.1.

91 gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 357.1-328.1; byuang chub sems kyi ngo bo* brtags na med la/ bsam na thams cad du snang bas yod pa dang med pa gnyis med/ rang bzhin gar yang ma nges la yon tan gyi chos thams cad kyis bshag pas/ rtag chad gnyis med/ bde ba chen po mu mtha' med pa'i ngang la/ ngo bo mtshan dang grangs brjod las kyang 'das la/ de gang du'ang ma dmigs pas/ gcig dang du ma gnyis med/ de ltar rang rig pa ngo bo cir yang snang la gzung du med pas/ skyes pa dang ma skyes pa gnyis med/ rig pa rang 'byung gi ye shes kyi nyi ma ye phyogs med par brdad ba la nyin mo dang mtshan mo gnyis med/ 'gro ba rig(s) drug ye nas rang 'byung rdo rje 'od kyi sangs rgyas ming gi bla dags dang bral ba la/ sangs rgyas dang sems can gnyis med/ lhun gyi rdzogs pa'i chos nyid ye nas 'bral bu sku dang ye shes su rang shar ba la/ 'bras bu'i ming tsam du'ang brjod du med pas/ rgyu 'bral gnyis med. * The original has *kyi ngo bo kyi ngo bo*, which apparently is a redundancy.

nirvāṇa, sameness and variety, are all nondual in actuality. Here, to be sure, even the designation of nonduality is just a name without any inherent nature. It is just a skillful means to aid the practitioner in going beyond the grasping of any partial, phenomenal appearance. As a result, under this nondual reality of spontaneous perfection, one realizes not to conceptualize or purposefully strive for anything.[92] Even striving for the ultimate truth, gNubs chen warns us, is also one-sided, for this striving prevents the spontaneous presence of one's open awareness and, even worse, facilitates the apprehension of the deceptive, phenomenal appearance as authentic, like a person who mistakes a pile of stones in human shape for a real person. In this way, sentient beings, who are born even in degenerate times, should, paradoxically, artfully strive in the manner of effortless non-action to realize the nondual reality in the uncontrived manifestation of one's open awareness, the self-arisen primordial wisdom of one's awakened mind.[93]

As discussed in the cases of Chan and sTon mun, nonduality being neither-one-nor-two exhibits a delicate dynamic within a wholeness of being and knowing. This delicate dynamic, both philosophically and contemplatively, encompasses cause (or path) and effect (or fruition), gradualness (or mediation) and suddenness (or immediacy), so that they are integrated into a wholeness without being collapsed into a oneness. Surely, this dynamic is as artful and as intricate as that of spontaneous presence discussed earlier. In fact, nonduality and spontaneity should be understood as ideas/practices both reinforcing each other and contributing to the logic of immediacy. In actualizing and continuing the logic of immediacy, in a way, spontaneity creates a stabilizing easiness or effortlessness that releases one from the compulsion to act or strive without falling into stagnation or

[92] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 364.1-364.3.
[93] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 369.1-369.3.

laxity, whereas nonduality gives rise to a kinetic energy or momentum that inspirits one to embody oneself in conditional forms without destabilizing the formless field of openness.

Consequently, nonduality and spontaneity together establish the aforementioned "dynamic stillness" that depicts a fruitional path or a distance-less journey, in which the traveler (*i.e.*, practitioner) never leaves home but experiences everything possible. Here, what the traveler experiences certainly should not be understood as illusion or delusion. Rather, what the traveler perceives is not only meaningful to him/herself but also meaningful or beneficial to his/her fellow travelers. Contemplatively speaking, this meaningful reality, nondual and spontaneous, is uniquely realized in the uncontrived manifestation of one's open awareness, and it is also with this uncontrived manifestation that the logic of immediacy in contemplation is not only fulfilled but also sustained unceasingly.

H. The View That Takes Great Wholeness as Principle

Another obscure master by the name of Sras Thubo Ratsahata (Prince Thubo Rājahasti) is said to teach this eighth Dzogchen view that takes one great-wholeness (Tib. *thig le chen po gcig*) as the main principle. As far as history is concerned, we know practically nothing about this master except that he was the uncle of dGa' rab rdo rje.[94] According to the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, this eighth perspective principally teaches the nature of one great-wholeness (Tib. *thig le chen po gcig gi rang bzhin*); gNubs chen depicts this eighth view as follows.

[94] For this story, see *e.g.*, Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 19. Sras Thubo Ratsahata's name is also found on several lists of early masters holding Atiyoga lineages. For these lists, see Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 19-21.

> If one asks what it [i.e., reality] is like, conceptual elaboration is an aspect of the phenomenal world. It [*i.e.*, conceptual elaboration] appears to those who misunderstand [reality] and to those who are still learners of various kinds. But, the open awareness that is [also] the awakened mind is naturally free of all conceptual elaboration; in the nature of great wholeness, it [i.e., open awareness] is the state of enlightenment so that it neither avoids nor grasps duality. In designation, it can only be called "the one [great-wholeness]" as it is matchless. In its very essence, it transcends any labeling.[95]

Thus, as an aspect of phenomenal reality, conceptual elaboration has led sentient beings to apprehend insubstantial appearances in their diversity, but this apprehended diversity is naturally observed by the "enlightening eye" of open awarensss, for it is the state of enlightenment itself. As the state of enlightenment, the open awareness that is also the awakened mind is uniquely called the "one great-wholeness." In this one great-wholeness, which is also personified as the All Good Samantabhadra in the Dzogchen tradition, everything spontaneously presents itself without the need of labeling. In this way, one naturally neither avoids nor grasps nonduality. After all, in spontaneous perfection, why should one avoid or grasp anything? Simply, in this original state, there is no dualistic grasping (Tib. *gnyis su 'dzin pa*), no speculative imputation (Tib. *sgro*) or veneration (Tib. *bskur*), no self or others whatsoever. It is only the self-realization (Tib. *rang rnyed*) of the one great-wholeness in one's artful endeavor of non-analysis (Tib. *mi dpyad*).[96]

In the spirit of a fruitional vehicle, this one great-wholeness is said to have no path of liberation (Tib. *grol ba'i lam*) leading to it but itself, because of its singular or

[95] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 369.4-369.6: ji lta yin zhe na/ spros pa ni chos ril gyi rang bzhin nyid/ log rtog dang lam pa la tha dad par snang tsam nyid na/ rang rig pa byang chub kyi sems spros pa thams cad dang ngang gis bral ba thig le chen po'i rang bzhin du sangs rgyas pa la gnyis spros kyi chos thams cad ma spangs ma dmigs pa'i phyir/ tha snyad tsam du zla med pas gcig ces brjod du zad kyi/ ngo bo nyid ming dang bral lo. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 118.

[96] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 370.1-370.4.

all-encompassing nature. In this wholeness, it transcends the duality of unity and multiplicity. Even the conceptual elaboration that gives rise to diversity is subsumed as it is, that is, as the spontaneous play of the awakened mind. In this spontaneous presence, non-reification (Tib. *mi dmigs*) or non-abidance (Tib. *mi gnas*) is taken as the abode of nirvāṇic fruition that can only be reaped in the cosmic womb (Tib. *bha ga*) of the indivisible and spontaneously perfect sphere (Tib. *dbyer med lhun rdzogs thig le*). Consequently, in this non-abiding manner, the practitioner does not withdraw oneself from anything; the mind that is free of forms makes all forms perfect and complete. Here, gNubs chen emphatically reminds his audience that the above principle *is* the ultimate intention of the Victorious One.[97]

But gNubs chen also warns his audience that the one great-wholeness should not be turned into the one principle (Tib. *chos gcig*) to pursue. In doing so, the practitioner only pursues the darkness to get to the sun, which will only end in complete failure and give rise to obscuration. Thus, the great-wholeness can never be established or realized through conceptualization or purposeful actions. The great-wholeness, gNubs chen further explains, encompasses six kinds of wholeness or spheres (Tib. *thig le*), each of which embodies some specific qualities or attributes.[98] Those who possess objective grasping will never see this great-wholeness that, while it seems to appear as sixfold,

[97] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 370.5-373.6.

[98] These six kinds of wholeness or sphere are characterized as follows: (1) having no extremes and being the source of everything, it is the sphere of ultimate space (Tib. *dbyings kyi thig le*); (2) naturally purifying all extremes without being utilized (Tib. *ma bkol*), it is the sphere of completely pure space (Tib. *dbyings rnam dag pa'i thig le*); (3) free from all partiality without contrivance and adulteration, it is the sphere of fundamental reality (Tib. *chos nyid kyi thig le*); (4) self-arising without causitive conditions, it is the sphere of great primordial wisdom (Tib. *ye shes chen po'i thig le*); (5) neither grasping the saṃsāra of lower realms nor abandoning it, it is the sphere of All Good Samantabhadra (Tib. *kun tu bzang po'i thig le*); and (6) as the sphere, in which everything, from the Buddhas to the hell beings, is spontanelusly perfect without extrems or centers, it is the sphere of spontaneous presence (Tib. *lhun gyi grub pa'i thig le*); see gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 374.6-375.5.

does not even have one.[99] After all, the one great-wholeness, being unparalleled and indescribable, exhibits a non-analytic logic that goes beyond the Aristotelian logic or conventional language.[100] Specifically, instead of Aristotelian "either-or" logic, the non-analytic logic of the great wholeness embraces all categories including all dyadic positions or contradictions such as unity and multiplicity, being and nonbeing, Buddhas and sentient beings. Not only does it embrace them, but it embraces them to the degree that these categories, no matter if they are oppositional or not, are thoroughly dissolved into conditionally arising aspects or qualities of the wholeness. In this way, the great wholeness of Dzogchen embodies no categories yet is self-pregnant (*i.e.*, in the sense of self-arising) with non-abiding or indefinite possibilities. Such a paradoxical wholeness, as mentioned earlier, can only be realized through one's artful endeavor of non-analysis that is in accord with the principle of effortless non-action.

The Dzogchen wholeness that can only be realized in its entirety, as discussed above, is the matrix underlying the delicate dynamics of nonduality and spontaneous presence, given which the Dzogchen logic of immediacy is actualized. In actualizing the logic of immediacy, the Dzogchen wholeness must allow the discussed "skillful effort" just as Shenhui's "equal learning" allows gradual cultivation and the sTon mun simultaneity allows conventionality in their respective contexts. In addition, similar to what I have argued for the wholeness of Shenhui's "equal learning," in which *samādhi*-being and *prajñā*-knowing integrate the three types of nondualism in Klein's typology into an integral whole,[101] the Dzogchen wholeness of primordial basis and open awareness also

[99] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 374.2-375.5.
[100] For a further analysis of the great wholeness in relation to reasoning, see Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, 53-85.
[101] See my discussion in Chapter 2, Section III.B of this dissertation. See also Klein's discussion on the

embodies such a holography of nondual relationships depicting the nonduality between objects, between self and others, and between one's present status and future ideal. This is primarily due to the mutual interfusion and permeation of one's open awareness and primordial basis demonstrated in Section I of this chapter.

Moreover, as in the case of the sTon mun wholeness, in which the conventional is engaged in the manner of ultimacy, whereas the ultimate is embodied in the conventional, the Dzogchen wholeness, as a result of mutual interfusion and permeation, dissolves the boundaries of all dyadic categories in the spontaneous presence of one's open awareness but reveals the conditional appearances of all phenomena in the dynamic display of the primordial basis, both in their totality and diversity. In this way, not only is the Dzogchen wholeness both singular and plural, but its spontaneous presence, in the form of one's open awareness, insightfully informs us that there can be no "abstract truth," for nothing is divorced from the subjective engagement of one's open awareness. Nonetheless, the usual qualm of cultural or moral relativism should not be associated with this subjective engagement, for the spontaneous presence of one's open awareness is said to be in complete accord with the appearing conditions of physical reality.

I. The View That Takes the-Basis-of-All-Existence-Just-as-It-Is as Principle

The last Dzogchen view gNubs chen introduces in the *bSam gtan mig sgron* takes the-basis-of-all-existence-just-as-it-is (Tib. *chos thams cad gzhi ji bzhin pa*) as the main principle. It is said that this view is taught by dGa' rab rdo rje, rGyal bo 'Da' he na ta lo, and gNubs chen himself. As the only master who has been mentioned twice in gNubs chen's presentation of Dzogchen views, dGa' rab rdo rje seems to occupy a unique place

three types of nondualism (Klein, *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen*, 151-158).

in the transmission of Dzogchen since its early years.[102] As for rGyal bo 'Da' he na ta lo, a king of Oḍḍiyāna, he is said to be the grandfather of dGa' rab rdo rje.[103] And, the fact that gNubs chen mentions himself as a propounder of this view indicates that, in his mind, this ninth view encompasses all the Dzogchen teachings that have been discussed. He explains,

> The view, *i.e.*, the-basis-of-all-existence-just-as-it-is, is especially unmistaken. If one asks why, it is because the essential nature of all things is uncontrived and incorruptible. It is the Great Completeness of Atiyoga. Names synonymous with this, which accord with its manifesting qualities, are innumerable. The reality of suchness has no reification and grasping. Consequently, it is also known as "non-referentiality." With respect to it, all fruitions are originally perfect and complete. Thus, it is also known as "spontaneous presence." The reality of suchness does not even have the name of suffering. Thus, it is also known as "great bliss." There are no other phenomena. Thus, it is also known as "great being." There are no [matchless] companions and conceptual elaboration. Thus, it is known as "great wholeness." There are no extreme phenomena. Thus, it is also known as "nonduality." This very suchness naturally illuminates everything. Thus, it is also known as "self-arisen primordial wisdom." Because it involves no efforts, it does not wish for any fruition. Thus, it is also known as "effortless non-action." Even though there are these different designations, their essences are not different. As a result, one is all and all is one. They are all the synonymous names of the-basis-just-as-it-is.[104]

As everything is uncontrived and incorruptible from the primordial beginning, be it

[102] As mentioned earlier, dGa' rab rdo rje has been recognized as the first human Dzogchen master in the Nyingma tradition. Thus, all Dzogchen lineages are traced back to him. For a biography of dGa' rab rdo rje, see, *e.g.*, Tulku Thondup, *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, 55-58. In addition, dGa' rab rdo rje also appears in Bön narratives; see, *e.g.*, Klein and Wangyal, *Unbounded Wholeness*, 195 and footnote 132.

[103] See *e.g.*, Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 19.

[104] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 375.5-377.1; chos thams cad gzhi ji bzhin par lta ba ni/ khyad par du'ang ma nor ba ste/ de ci'i phyir zhe na/ dngos po rnams kyi de kho na nyid kha na ma bcos ma bslad pa nyid pas a ti yo ga rdzogs pa chen po'o/ de'i mtshan gyi rnams grangs ni yon tan gyi cha las snang ba grangs las 'das so/ de kho na nyid la dmigs 'dzin med pas/ gza' gtad bral zhes bya ba yang grags/ de la 'bras bu ril rdzogs pas lhun gyi grub pa zhes bya bar yang grags/ de kho na sdug bsngal ming med pas bde ba chen po zhes bya bar yang grags/ gzhan pa'i chos med pas bdag nyid chen por yang grags/ zla dang spros pa med pas thig le chen por grags/ mtha'i chos med pas gnyis su med par yang grags/ de nyid du thams cad du gsal bas rang 'byung ye shes su yang grags/ 'bras bu la re ba med pas mi rtsol ba'i phyir/ bya rtsol bral ba zhes bya bar yang grags te/ de dag rtags tha dad kyang ngo bo la tha dad med pas/ gcig kyang thams cad yin la/ thams cad gcig pas/ gzhi ji bzhin pa'i mtshan gyi rnams grags so. See also Karmay, *The Great Perfection*, 118.

one or all, all particularized manifestations are of the same nature, nominally called the Great Completeness (or Dzogchen) of the supreme yoga, and ultimately, all phenomena demonstrate the nature of the-basis-just-as-it-is or what we have called earlier, primordial basis. Even though the-basis-just-as-it-is is indescribable, there are characteristics, such as the eight discussed views, that can demonstrate its principles so that the practitioner can realize it with some guidance. Regarding these guiding skillful means, gNubs chen also reminds his audience that, in the spirit of innate non-contrivance and spontaneous incorruptibility, skillful means should not be reified, for if primordially there is no conceptual reference point to begin with, then how could there exist a reified view of non-referentiality? In addition, if everything is already in the state of spontaneous presence, then how could there be a concrete view of spontaneous presence? If the-basis-of-all-existence-just-as-it-is should not even be "viewed as suchness" (Tib. *de nyid du'ang mi lta*),[105] then how could there exist the viewers and the views?[106]

The-basis-just-as-it-is, if understood correctly, is just the nature or great being of onself (Tib. *bdag nyid*). gNubs chen tells us, when one understands it mistakenly, one strives (Tib. *'bad pa*) and pursues after (Tib. *rjes su 'breng*) spontaneous presence, self-arisen primordial wisdom, great bliss, and so forth without realizing that they are just the great being of oneself.[107] Being the nature of oneself, these qualities or states are not to be pursued. Rather, the practitioner neither conceptualizes nor wishes for them (Tib. *sems pa med 'dod pa med*). As a result, a Dzogchen adept

> does not engage in reasoning, does not examine, does not conceptualize, does not actualize, does not investigate, does not measure; he does not [purposefully] do anything whosoever. Rather,

[105] This "viewed as suchness" is in a sense of grasping suchness to have a substantial essence.
[106] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 377.1-377.5.
[107] Ibid, 378.1-379.4.

> in the manner of non-postulation he posits. To the suchness just as it is, in non-knowing he knows, in non-acquirement he acquires, in non-achievement he achieves, in non-seeing he sees, in non-realization he realizes, in non-attainment he attains, in non-visualization he visualizes, and in non-experience he experiences.[108]

Thus, in the manner of non-conceptualization or non-reification, the Dzogchen adept sees the nature of oneself just as it is; it is just like, gNubs chen illustrates, one will see the planets and stars in the sky by the self-settling or pacification of the covering clouds rather than by illuminating them. In this way, the practitioner stays with the unmistaken principle of reality and reveals the state of awareness-holder (Tib. *rig 'dzin gyi gral*) from within.[109]

Although the-basis-of-all-existence-just-as-it-is has innumerable names, these names are simply designations. As designations, they should not be grasped or reified. Rather, they have provisional functions to help the practitioner neutralize or let go of all grasping. The-basis-just-as-it-is is not anything but suitable for everything (Tib. *ci yang min no gang yang rung*). Accordingly, how could one grasp or relinquish what is not anything? In this manner of neither-grasping-nor-relinquishing, all designations, albeit devoid of inherent nature, are utilized spontaneously as antidotes to whatever situations they fit. So, permanence is taught to neutralize the grasping of impermanence and vice versa; nonbeing is taught to neutralize the grasping of being and vice versa; and effortless non-action is taught to neutralize the grasping of arduous striving and vice versa.[110]

In the clear light of the basis that is one's awakened mind, nothing whatsoever is

[108] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 379.5-380.1; gtan tshigs ma btsug/ ma gzhig bas ma bsam/ mngon du ma byas/ ma brtags/ ma gzhal/ de ci yang bya ba med par/ ma bzhag par bzhag pa/ ji bzhin pa de kho na nyid/ mi rig par rig/ mi rnyed par rnyed/ ma bsgrub par grub/ ma mthong bar mthong/ ma rtogs par rtogs/ ma thob par thob/ mi gsal bar gsal/ ma myong bar myong bar 'gyur ro.

[109] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 380.1-380.3.

[110] See Ibid, 384.3-387.1.

obstructed; even "to be" (Tib. *yin pa*) is not suitable to be held as "to be." In this supreme Atiyoga, gNubs chen proclaims, the-basis-just-as-it-is spontaneously appears in the non-stopping of all dwelling or thinking, and the key is, he unequivocally writes, "not to conceptualize it" (Tib. *mi rtog*)! After all, all is oneself and oneself appears as everything. Understood in this way, perceived experience and non-grasping simultaneously self-manifest to be without their respective conceptual reference points (Tib. *dmigs gtad med par*).[111]

Here, one can certainly say that, in an explicit tone of simplicity and naturalness, gNubs chen integrates all teachings into the-basis-just-as-it-is. In the integration, he does not simplify the diversity of dynamic manifestations. Rather, he reminds his audience to let them be, to embrace them without reifying them. In the manner of non-reification, one perceives everything in their nakedness (*i.e.*, without any conceptual reference) and uses them freely and fittingly without any conceptual limitation. That being so, there are no views or perspectives to begin with; non-referentiality, spontaneity, nonduality, bliss, or wholeness are just nominal designations, the provisional means, for the practitioner to engage in a kind of "skillful effort" to traverse the path. As it is an artful endeavor, it thus should not be just philosophically understood but contemplatively actualized. For the actualization, the uncompromising logic, as this "**last view**" shows us, lies in the manner or mechanism of "just-is-ness" (Tib. *ji bzhin nyid*). In this regard, this "just-is-ness" is the ultimate logic of immediacy in contemplation, to which the contemplative teachings of Chan, sTon mun, and Dzogchen all converge.

[111] See Ibid, 401.5-402.1.

III. Dzogchen Methods for Letting the Mind Be

To complete our journey into gNubs chen's presentation of Dzogchen teachings, the practical aspect of his presentation should also be touched upon, especially given the understanding that, in the last view, he essentially turns the philosophical discussions of the previous views into instructions for contemplative practice. Particularly, he points out the provisional function of these views (*e.g.*, as antidotes) to help the practitioner let go of different aspects of conceptual grasping. Yet, how does the practitioner specifically let go of conceptual grasping through the contemplative instructions based on the presented Dzogchen principles? Did these Dzogchen practitioners of the tenth century also perform the methods of "cutting through" (or "setting free"; Tib. *khregs chod*) and "sudden leap" (or "soaring on"; Tib. *thod rgal*) as the later Dzogchen practitioners of the Nyingma School have done?[112] Did they also utilize the "intermediate state or *bardo*" (Tib. *bar do*) for the access of awakening and liberation?[113]

Exhibiting strong characteristics of what David Germano calls "*pristine* Great

[112] The methods of "cutting through" (or "setting free") and "sudden leap" (or "soaring on") are, in general, considered *the* special practices in the Nyingma Dzogchen traditions, especially associated with the Esoteric Precept Series. Regarding these unique Dzogchen practices, the fourteenth Dalai Lama characterizes them in the following words: "On the basis of that key point, when we talk about the *path*, and if we use the special vocabulary of the Dzogchen tradition, and refer to its own extraordinary practices, the path is twofold, that of *trekchö* and *tögal*. The trekchö approach is based upon the primordial purity of mind, kadag, while the *tögal* approach is based upon its spontaneous presence, lhundrup. This is the equivalent in the Dzogchen tradition of what is more commonly referred to as the path that is the union of skilful means and wisdom" (Dalai Lama, *Dzogchen*, 32). For an introduction of these two techniques, see Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, Vol. I, 334-345 and Tulku Thondup, *The Practice of Dzogchen by Longchen Rabjam*, 67-76. As these two techniques are mostly associated with the Esoteric Precept Series, according to David Germano, they are probably introduced into the different genres of Dzogchen after the eleventh century; see Germano, "The Funerary Transformation of the Great Perfection (*Rdzogs chen*)."

[113] The idea of "bardo" was first introduced to the West in the book entitled *Tibetan Book of the Dead* compiled and edited by W. Y. Evans-Wentz. Ever since its publication in 1927, the book has fascinated numerable readers. For a general introduction of the bardo teaching, see, *e.g.*, Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, 106-130 and the references on bardo in the Index. For a history of early Dzogchen transformations including the emergence of the bardo theory, see Germano, "The Funerary Transformation of the Great Perfection (*Rdzogs chen*)."

Perfection" that are "marked by the absence of presentations of detailed ritual and contemplative technique,"[114] the practical aspect of gNubs chen's Dzogchen can be said to be epitomized in the methods of letting the mind be (Tib. *blo bzhag*) in its natural state. In line with Germano's characterization, these early Dzogchen methods, unlike their later counterparts, take no definite forms; namely, they do not have a fixed set of ritual or procedures to follow or require the practitioner to sit in a particular posture or to visualize the deity.[115] Instead, they direct the practitioner to *act in accord* (Tib. *mthun pa'i spyod pa*) with Dzogchen principles in the manner of neither-grasping-nor-relinquishing at all times. Thus, the practitioner takes all phenomena as the path and engages in a living practice that is never separate from the guiding principles of Great Completeness (Tib. *don dang bsgom pa por rgya ma chad*). Now let us see how gNubs chen explicates these methods to his audience.

A. The Dzogchen Principle of "Acting Accordingly"

In the beginning of his Dzogchen meditation (Tib. *bsgom pa*) section in the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, gNubs chen first states that Dzogchen meditation is composed of two aspects: (1) the methods regarding how to discipline the body (Tib. *lus kyi bzhag thabs*) and (2) the methods regarding how to access or engage the mind (Tib. *sems kyi 'jug*

[114] Germano, "The Funerary Transformation of the Great Perfection (*Rdzogs chen*)," 3. Generally speaking, the meditation section of the *bSam gtan mig sgron*, as comprehensive as it is, lacks detailed discussion on most of the dominating Dzogchen practices in the later centuries, which include tantric *sādhana*-based rituals, the unique practices of "cutting through" and "sudden leap," and practices derived from the *bardo* theory. Be that as it may, it still gives us a valuable glimpse of how Dzogchen meditation might have been practiced in the tenth century. In addition, it does include a brief discussion on a practice that seems to be a precursor of the later *'pho ba* or transference of consciousness practice; see gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 423.6-425.3. For an introduction of the *'pho ba* practice, see, *e.g.*, Patrul Rinpoche, *The Words of My Perfect Teachers* (translated by the Padmakara Translation Group), 351-365.

[115] According to David Germano's research, the later Dzogchen practices that specifically require tantric rituals and visualization procedures emerged in history probably around and/or after the 11th century, about half a century or a century later than the composition of gNubs chen's *bSam gtan mig sgron*; see Germano, "The Funerary Transformation of the Great Perfection (*Rdzogs chen*)," 2-3.

thabs).[116] With respect to the former, gNubs chen writes,

> [In this system] there is no [specific] bodily discipline like [that of] the lower yogas of development, because it is free of any notion of bodily grasping or attachment. Thus, there are no definite methods regarding how to position the body. However, if one asks, "Does one then reject [all the bodily discipline,] such as cross-legged sitting and so forth, of the lower [vehicles]," [my response is that] one does not reject them as long as one does not grasp [or attach oneself to] the body. Nor does one accept them intentionally. [In that way,] there is no contradiction in sitting cross-legged, lying down facing up or down, or stretching in whatever way whatsoever. The practice of yoga itself makes anything into bliss, and laziness is [surely] a wrong action.[117]

This general principle of neither-grasping-nor-relinquishing regarding sitting posture and so forth is evidently in accord with the Dzogchen spirit of spontaneous presence with which nothing is reified nor abandoned. As the practitioner truly realizes this effortless principle, he or she, on the one hand, attaches to no definite physical discipline and, on the other hand, will not fall into laxity, either. Rather, the practitioner engages in bodily discipline without any bit of contrivance, for contrivance is a result of conceptualization and leads one away from the suchness of reality. In the primordial perfection of everything, how can there exist any contradiction in the things or actions themselves? It is the intention of the doer that can give rise to contradiction. Hence, as long as there is grasping, sitting postures, staying at solitary or household places, or any action whatsoever will all not be in accord with the suchness of reality. It is only in one's self-arisen primordial wisdom itself that the practitioner finds the true "solitary place" (Tib. *dben pa'i gnas*) and transforms the arduous practice of yoga into the bliss of

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[116] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 403.3.

[117] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 403.4-403.6; bskyed pa'i rnal 'byor man chad ltar lus bcos la bzhag pa med de/ lus 'dzin pa'i 'du shes dang bral ba'i phyir/ lus la 'dug thabs nges par bzhag pa med do/ 'o na 'og ma'i skyil mo krung la sogs pa dgag gam zhe na/ lus su ma dmigs phan chad dgag tu med de/ ched du dang du len pa med na/ skyil mo la sogs pa gan rkyal khas bub gang du 'bre yang 'gal med do/ rnal 'byor nyid gang bde bar bya ste/ snyoms las kyis ni bya ba ma yin no.

spontaneous perfection.[118] Again, we see here that, in Dzogchen, it is only in the context of spontaneity that one finds the validity of effort, for such effort will not be arduous anymore. Rather, it is a kind of "skillful effort" *in-spirited* with the presence of spontaneity.

Yet the general principle of neither-grasping-nor-relinquishing regarding the bodily discipline takes another form when it comes to the methods of how to engage the mind. With respect to that, gNubs chen explains,

> On the methods of how to engage the mind, it is an engaging without engagement. It is the suchness of reality that does not reify anything whatsoever and that naturally illuminates the essence of the great non-conceptual nature or being. Consequently, the realization of non-engaging itself is known as the engaging.[119]

So, why is the mind only engaged in the manner of non-engaging? For gNubs chen, it is because the awakened mind is the suchness of reality; it is non-reifiable and does not reify anything whatsoever. It is the enlightened nature of oneself, thus self-illuminating in its own non-conceptuality. As discussed earlier, this non-conceptual great being is also the wholeness that encompasses all and is indivisible as well. In this all-encompassing, indivisible whole, how can there be an engagement, for such an idea implies incompleteness and division? As a result, the methods regarding how to "engage" the awakened mind can only be a non-engaging that is nominally called an engaging. As gNubs chen exemplifies, a master magician, who knows the illusory nature of all things created by magic, will not be stunned by them.[120] Similarly, with authentic knowing, the practitioner will not be stunned by all the phenomenal appearances; he or she knows them

[118] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 404.1-405.6.
[119] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 405.6-406.2; sems kyi 'jug thabs ni/ 'di 'jug pa med par 'jug pa'o/ de ni ji bzhin pa de kho na nyid de la/ gang yang ma dmigs te/ bdag nyid mi rtog pa chen po'i ngo bor gsal bas/ de 'jug tu med par shes pa nyid zhugs par bzhed do.
[120] See gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 402.1-402.3.

just as they are. In the spirit of non-engaging, the practitioner engages all conventionality with the openness of one's open awareness that resides nowhere but permeates everywhere.

For those who are looking for specific instructions on how to discipline the body and how to engage the mind, the above gNubs chen's presentation of Dzogchen meditation will probably not be satisfactory. It is however this kind of dissatisfaction that is worth questioning from the Dzogchen perspective. Even though it seems that the above instructions give no real methods regarding how to meditate, the *bona fide* significance is in the *formlessness* of these methods as it "resides nowhere but permeates everywhere." As such, various instructions developed by later Dzogchen traditions are however not in contradiction with this formlessness as long as these instructions are meant to prepare practitioners for this "formless" type of Dzogchen meditation.

In gNubs chen's presentation, the pervasiveness of the formless particularly requires its practitioner to *act* (Tib. *spyod pa*) or, more precisely, to *be*, in accord with the nature of phenomenal reality at all times. Regarding this Dzogchen principle of "acting accordingly,"[121] what gNubs chen writes about how to perform actions for the sake of oneself and others is just befitting; he states,

> Without contriving or adulterating the three doors [of body, speech, and mind], one sees [all] phenomena with one's [awakened] mind and then acts accordingly. Neither doing nor stopping doing, one simply acts without attachments.[122]

Indeed, in the spirit of primordial perfection and spontaneous presence, one should

[121] Even though it is more accurate to characterize gNubs chen's "formless" Dzogchen meditation as "to *be in accord* with the nature of reality," I coin the term "acting accordingly" primarily based on gNubs chen's own words, namely, "one sees [all] phenomena with one's [awakened] mind and then *acts accordingly*."

[122] gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bSam gtan mig sgron*, 12.6-13.1; sgo gsum bcos slad med par sems kyis chos lta ba dang rjes su mthun pa'i spyod pa'ang/ bya ba med bya ba mi 'gog ma chags par spyod do.

simply act (*i.e.*, simply be) without any attachment whatsoever. To do so, as gNubs chen teaches, is to act in accord with what one's awakened mind (or open awareness) sees. As the above brief discussion demonstrates, this principle of "acting accordingly without attachments," for gNubs chen, is applicable to all functions, including disciplining the body, engaging the mind, performing altruistic deeds, etc. Given this understanding, the Dzogchen meditation following such a principle can be characterized as a living practice that is in accord with the teachings of Great Completeness.

One thing should be worthwhile noting here. That is, even though the above brief discussion on the "negative paths" and living practice of gNubs chen's Dzogchen are reminiscent of the "negative paths" and holistic practices seen in the cases of Shenhui's sudden Chan and the sTon mun simultaneous access, one should not however equate these traditions based on these similarities. Rather, one should also look into the respective larger contexts of these "similarities," namely, how each tradition conceptualizes its entire system of teachings and practices. That is the reason why we have seen earlier that each tradition implements the logic of immediacy in contemplation in a differet way and thus brings different emphases or attributes out of the logic of immediacy.[123]

B. Letting the Mind Be in Its Natural State

But, how is the said Dzogchen living practice possible? Doesn't it depend on having the access to the awakened mind so that one can see it or, actually, *be* it? Here, gNubs chen's instructions on how to "let the mind be" (Tib. *blo bzhag*) may offer a possible

[123] I am referring to my above discussions that Shenhui's sudden Chan integrates gradualness in the context of suddenness; sTon mun embraces conventionality in the manner of ultimacy; and gNubs chen's Dzogchen engages skillful effort in the presence of spontaneity.

solution, as his instructions are to reveal the awakened mind through the skillful means of letting-it-be. Yet, in the spirit of non-engaging, gNubs chen also reminds us, the true meaning of letting-it-be lies in realizing the suchness of reality, in which there is actually no letting (Tib. *gzhag tu med pa*) at all. It is just as it is. Specifically, gNubs chen explains,

> There are also nominally the methods of letting the mind be. Generally, there are: the method of attaining [the mind,] the method of stabilizing [the mind,] and the method of completely non-grasping [the mind]. Employing these methods in the depth of [one's] view, a supreme yogi meditates according to the ascertained principles [shown] above. The meditator should never be separate from these principles that, due to the one [great wholeness], are the essence of fundamental reality just as it is. Therefore, one lets the mind be without the intention of letting it be; it is just as it is.[124]

Ultimately, it is just as it is. Nevertheless, conventionally, there are designations and skillful means. So, with respect to the above three methods for letting the mind be, gNubs chen annotates, the method of attaining (Tib. *thob par byed pa'i thabs*) the mind is that even though everything is nominal, a mere designation, the practitioner nonetheless engages each of the things as the path of enlightenment (Tib. *byang chub kyi lam*), for everything is uncontrived and incorruptible from the primordial beginning; they are already in the state of completeness and perfection. Given this understanding that everything is the path to enlightenment, the practitioner thus engages them accordingly in order to reveal his/her awakened mind. This is nominally called "attaining the mind," and in the attainment, one spontaneously lets the mind be in its awakened state.

As for the method of stabilizing (Tib. *brtan par byed pa'i thabs*) the mind, gNubs

[124] Ibid, 408.4-409.2; … blo tha snyad tsam du bzhag pa'i thabs kyang/ spyir thob par byed pa'i thabs/ brtan par byed pa'i thabs/ yongs su mi 'dzin pa'i thabs te/ lta ba'i khong gis khol te/ de la lhag pa'i rnal 'byor pas/ bsgom pa'ang gong du thag chod pa'i don ji bzhin te/ don dang bsgom pa por rgya ma chad de/ gcig pa'i phyir chos nyid ji bzhin pa'i ngo bo yin pas/ blo ji bzhin par ched du ma bzhag par bzhag go.

chen states that, with respect to all phenomena, the practitioner does not stop using the "six doors" (Tib. *sgo drug*), namely, the six perceptual senses (Tib. *tshogs drug*). But, he or she uses them in a way that, even though objects appear in perception, the practitioner does not conceptualize them (Tib. *bsam pa*) so that the mind is relaxed (Tib. *lhug pa*) in its natural, non-conceptual state. In this state of natural relaxation, the practitioner indeed perceives all things with the awakened mind so that he or she can then act accordingly. Such a state of total harmony in relaxation is the unsurpassable stabilization, for all things are perceived just as they are without any contrived distortion.

Finally, gNubs chen explains, the method of completely non-grasping (Tib. *yongs su mi 'dzin pa'i thabs*) the mind teaches that for one to be free from all objects (thus attachments), one needs to go beyond the three extremes (Tib. *mtha' gsum*) of self, others, and the things involved. To do so, one must understand (Tib. *rtogs*) the words (*i.e.*, teachings) of Dzogchen, meditate (Tib. *bsgom*) on them, and experience (Tib. *nyams*) them until one's open awareness naturally arises from within. In the self-arising of one's open awareness, the practitioner rests effortlessly in the spontaneous presence of the awakened mind completely free from any grasping or reification.

Given these annotated instructions, as gNubs chen clearly indicates in the quoted passage, the practitioner must employ these methods of "letting the mind be" in the "depth of [one's] view" (Tib. *lta ba'i khong*) so that he or she internalizes these methods to the effect of being a supreme yogi who meditates or acts in complete accord with all the "ascertained principles" of Dzogchen. In this way, the practitioner is never separate from the Dzogchen principles that, for gNubs chen, are the essence of suchness, the reality as it is. Consequently, the practitioner lets the mind be just as it is. In this suchness, as the

practitioner acts in accord with the principles of Great Completeness, he or she essentially embodies a Dzogchen living practice or life, in which nothing is intentionally done, yet everything spontaneously presents the primordial perfection of itself. In other words, in this Dzogchen life, the practitioner *acts* effortlessly and *lets* himself/herself simply *be* in the state of natural perfection. That, I believe, is the quintessence of gNubs chen's Dzogchen meditation, the logic of immediacy in contemplation in the form of spontaneous presence, performed in a living practice of profound simplicity. Thus, different from Shenhui's integration of suddenness and gradualness and the sTon mun simultaneous embrace of the ultimate and the conventional, gNubs chen's presentation of Dzogchen especially brings out the aroma of spontaneity in the logic of immediacy in contemplation.

PART III

Final Conclusions and Remarks

Chapter 6. Conclusions and Significance for the Study of Religion

American writer Ursula K. LeGuin once wrote, "It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters in the end." As we journey toward the end, let us also reflect back upon where we started and what we have obtained from the various areas we traveled. Evidently, the issue of our departure, namely, building upon Deutsch's proposition of "knowing religiously" to find an alternative to onto-theo-centric paradigms for religious studies, has brought us to traverse the historical, philosophical, contemplative, and even polemic terrains of Chan, sTon mun, and Dzogchen. During our expeditions, we discovered that the three traditions all offer a logic of immediacy that integrates being and knowing into a wholeness also suffused with joy, spontaneity, and deep presence. Not only do descriptions of this wholeness offer a philosophical discourse delineating ideas including suddenness, nonduality, simultaneity, and spontaneity, but they also embody contemplative instructions that help practitioners to embrace all but reify none. With such an all-embracing awareness, the practitioners realize that only existence in total integration, being and knowing in wholeness, is the state of consummation.

As a category of philosophical analysis, the wholeness that integrates being and knowing can be an alternative to onto-theo-centric paradigms for religious studies. While there are still many issues to clarify in this early stage of the research, I would like to offer, as a tentative conclusion to our current discussion, some initial thoughts regarding some possible applications of the alternative paradigm and reflect upon how the discovered logic of immediacy that entails a nondual, holistic dynamic of being and knowing can be a source of inspiration for our everyday living experience. But before I

offer my thoughts on these topics, let me also make some final remarks regarding what we have learned of the three Buddhist traditions and reflect upon the significance of the contemplative perspective underscored in this research for the study of religion in general.

I. Chan, sTon mun, and Dzogchen: Fruitional Vehicles Embodying the Logic of Immediacy

To show the various issues related to, as well as the various aspects of, the idea of immediacy, I presented narratives and teachings developed over time, enriched through encounter, and informed by diverse thinkers and practitioners from different sectors of the religio-philosophical spectrum. In the presentation, not only do we see philosophical and contemplative variations of the logic of immediacy, but we also witness the complex historical trajectories of these variations and the ways their contemplative participants, both Chinese and Tibetan, shaped them independently and/or in conversation. In addition, we observe some possible polemic encounters as well.

In particular, starting from early Chinese *dhyāna* teachings, I traced the possible contribution of these teachings to the emergence of the distinguishing features of Chan Buddhism. Seen as a result of the mutual influence of local and foreign *chan* teachings, the three features that characterize Chan Buddhism as a tradition centering on the contemplative actualizing of sudden awakening essentially offer us a historical footing, a possible origin narrative for the logic of immediacy in contemplation.[1] On this historical footing, an exemplar, namely, the contemplative structure of Shenhui's sudden teaching,

[1] This, of course, is not saying that the origin narrative derived from the emergence of Chan Buddhism is the only origin narrative for the logic of immediacy; there certainly could be other antecedents and/or contemporary parallels.

was then given to illustrate a possible mechanism of how the logic of immediacy may work philosophically and contemplatively.

Therein, we see, with his integration of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation, Shenhui embodies the logic of immediacy in a holistic practice that is realized through the "equal learning" of *samādhi* and *prajñā*. Characterizing a nondual dynamic of being and knowing via their mutual interfusion and permeation, Shenhui's "equal leaning" also offers us a hermeneutic tool to understand the logic of immediacy in contemplation as an artful endeavor of taking the fruition as the path. In this way, Shenhui's sudden Chan is qualified as a fruitional vehicle, whose approach observes the logic of immediacy in contemplation. Nonetheless, Shenhui uniquely enlightens us, this logic of immediacy in contemplation paradoxically involves gradualness, but it integrates gradualness in the context of suddenness so that the logic of immediacy can be practically implemented without the dualistic or conceptual faults implied by the idea of gradualness.

Following the historical footsteps of Chan monks westwards, I then presented the syncretic development of sTon mun in Tibet. As an encounter narrative, this syncretic development conveys the message that the idea of immediacy is not an isolated phenomenon and its variations with distinct emphases can exist in different times and places. Accordingly, I next contrasted two understandings of the sTon mun simultaneity, which, instead of a usual polemic rendering, are understood as demonstrating the subtle philosophical and contemplative layers, thus the hermeneutic plasticity, associated with the idea of the sTon mun simultaneity in particular and the idea of immediacy in general.

Specifically, in the contrast we see, the contemplative idea of simultaneous access can be interpreted as derived from a philosophy of oneness that misses the nonduality of

the conventional and the ultimate, for it only upholds the ultimate as true. Yet, it can also be read as derived from a philosophy of wholeness that simultaneously embraces the two truths in a way through which the two truths interfuse each other to establish a nondual dynamic. Philosophically, this nondual dynamic also implies a nondual, holistic dynamic of being and knowing similar to the one given in Shenhui's sudden Chan. However, contemplatively, unlike Shenhui's integrating gradualness in the context of suddenness, the wholeness of the sTon mun simultaneity asks its practitioner to engage the conventional in the manner of the ultimate while embodying the ultimate in the conventional. Thus, in addition to what we learned from Shenhui's sudden Chan, in which the logic of immediacy in contemplation is said to require its practitioner to artfully employ gradual cultivation, the sTon mun simultaneity adds to our knowledge that the logic of immediacy in contemplation demands of its practitioner to engage all conventional phenomena, but the engagement must be done in the manner of ultimacy so that the practitioner realizes the logic of immediacy without falling into the bondage of conventionality. As this demand takes the whole as the path, it thus places sTon mun in the same camp as Shenhui's sudden Chan, namely, as a fruitional vehicle within the sūric traditions.

Tracking the doctrinal traces left by the Simultaneists and demonstrating other manifestations of the idea of immediacy, I delved into the teachings of early Dzogchen codified by gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in his *bSam gtan mig sgron.* Emphasizing the principles of primordial perfection and spontaneous presence, gNubs chen's Dzogchen depicts a fruitional path on which one resumes one's original Buddhahood in the wholeness of primordial basis and open awareness exhibiting the nondual, holistic

dynamic of being and knowing seen earlier. In this resumption, what one needs is neither laxity nor arduous effort but a delicate presence of spontaneity that also allows a kind of "skillful effort" for the pracitioner to traverse the path. But, similar to the spirit of Shenhui's integrating gradualness in the context of suddenness and the sTon mun engaging the conventional in the manner of ultimacy, the Dzogchen inclusion of "skillful effort" must be done in the context of spontaneity so that the logic of immediacy in contemplation is actualized without the deviation of purposeful effort.

To illustrate the various aspects of the Dzogchen teachings, gNubs chen presents nine different views or principles to bring light to the essence of Great Completeness. With ideas including non-referentiality, spontaneity, self-nature, bliss, nonduality, wholeness, and just-is-ness, we learned that these Dzogchen principles provide important characteristics to facilitate our understanding of Dzogchen as a whole. They also concur with and further extend what we learned from Shenhui's sudden Chan and sTon mun regarding the logic of immediacy. Yet, different from the characteristics of Shenhui and sTon mun, gNubs chen's presentation of these Dzogchen principles especially brings to the logic of immediacy a fine touch of spontaneous presence.

Evidently, various issues have been touched upon in this research, and the above synoptic recapitulation of our investigation of the histories and teachings of Chan, sTon mun, and Dzogchen has particularly highlighted what we have learned. That is, while all three traditions converge on the idea of interfusing being and knowing, ontology and epistemology, into an unbounded field of wholeness, they also bring different emphases or attributes out of the logic of immediacy. Fundamentally, these different emphases inform us that the logic of immediacy does not reject nominal intermediaries. Rather, it

employs these so-called "intermediaries" such as gradual cultivation, conventional means, or skillful effort, in specific ways so that immediacy is realized without the dualistic bondages and conceptual limitations implied in their original contexts of mediation, *i.e.*, the contexts of gradualness, conventionality, and effort. As a result, Shenhui's sudden Chan integrates gradualness in the context of suddenness; sTon mun embraces conventionality in the manner of ultimacy; and gNubs chen's Dzogchen engages skillful effort in the presence of spontaneity.

Hermeneutically, in the logic of immediacy, nothing of, or in, one's knowing is intermediary if one does not make it so. That is to say, it is *how* an "intermediary tool" such as a thought, a speech, or an action is employed rather than *what* it appears to be that truly defines what it is, for there is no mediation between one's being and knowing, between one's essence and manifestation. If there were, the proponents of immediacy contend, it is as if there were mediation between an ocean and its waves. Thus, while, as Bernard Faure correctly warns, the claims of immediacy should not be taken at face value, the findings of our investigation suggest that the key to understanding these claims of immediacy does not lie in Faure's proposal to "'think out the intermediary,' that is, 'the mid-point and the mediation, the middle term between total absence and the absolute plentitude of presence.'"[2] Rather, it lies in understanding the manner through which the intermediary is engaged.

Essentially, Faure's idea is derived from Jacques Derrida, who argues, "immediacy is derived" and "all begins through the intermediary."[3] In terms of cultural critique, Faure's approach is valid to bring light to potential sociopolitical issues underlying what

[2] Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, 66.
[3] Ibid.

he calls the "rhetoric of immediacy." However, his approach is problematic when he extends its premise to investigate contemplative issues, for such extension signifies a preconceived projection of sociopolitical concerns onto the contemplative dimension. In the projection, not only are contemplative concerns distorted, but it only allows dualistic epistemologies that divide everything into subject and object and thus accept the intermediary "at face value" without questioning its mediating nature. Consequently, excluding nondual epistemologies, Faure, similar to Steven Katz, categorically rejects the possibility of "*pure (i.e., unmediated) experiences*"[4] even before the possibility has been seriously examined. For these scholars assume, due to "the sorts of beings we are,"[5] our experiences are always mediated through cultural and/or linguistic factors.

Against such prejudgment, Maurice Merleau-Ponty's thoughtful words ask us to revise our methodology and "recommence everything"; he writes,

> If it is true that as soon as philosophy declares itself to be reflection or coincidence it prejudges what it will find, then once again it must recommence everything, reject the instruments reflection and intuition had provided themselves, and install itself in a locus where they have not yet been distinguished, in experiences that have not yet been "worked over," that offer us all at once, pell-mell, both "subject" and "object," both existence and essence, and hence give philosophy resources to redefine them.[6]

Indeed, revealing new resources to redefine, rather than prejudging, the meaning of intermediaries such as gradual cultivation, conventional means, and skillful effort is what our investigation of the logic of immediacy has done. In the locus of non-locus, the logic of immediacy is embodied in the wholeness of one's being and knowing, where experiences have not yet been "worked over" and both subject and object, both existence

[4] Katz, "Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism," 26.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* (translated by Alphonso Lingis), 130.

(or manifestation) and essence, are offered at once, or more precisely, integrated as a whole.

Not only has our investigation of the logic of immediacy provided us resources to redefine intermediaries, but it has also shown that the logic of immediacy is one of the defining characteristics of the fruitional vehicle. Nonetheless, we also learned that immediacy is not what the Buddhist vehicle of fruition is all about, for a direct access based on a mistaken understanding of reality only accesses an incomplete fruition, if not a distorted one. To access the complete and perfect fruition, the logic of immediacy must be in accord with such fruition. In that way, the logic of immediacy in contemplation *is* how the fruitional vehicle carries out its principle of taking the fruition as the path. During our investigation, I have shown individually that each of the three teachings expounds its own philosophy of how to directly access the complete and perfect fruition (*i.e.*, a sympathetic resonance with one's awakened mind; a simultaneous access to one's all-encompassing mind-source; a spontaneous presence of the primordial basis in one's open awareness). Consequently, I conclude that the three teachings of Shenhui's sudden Chan, sTon mun, and gNubs chen's Dzogchen, albeit associated with their respective sūtric and tantric traditions, are all fruitional vehicles embodying the logic of immediacy in contemplation.

The idea that a sūtric tradition can be a fruitional vehicle is potentially contentious, especially for Buddhist tantric thinkers and practitioners. Traditionally, for them, the line that separates sūtric and tantric traditions coincides with the line that separates causal and fruitional vehicles. It is however this "coincidence" that is being questioned by the above conclusion. That is to say, why are all sūtric traditions causal and all tantric traditions

fruitional? In fact, to be able to answer that question, one would have to define what a sūtric tradition really is and similarly what a tantric tradition really is. Yet, such definition can only be roughly given as saying, if a tradition is derived from the Buddhist sūtras, then it is a sūtric tradition. Similarly, a tantric tradition can be thus defined as well. However, these definitions are problematic not only because a scripture can be both a sūtra and a tantra such as the *Kun byed rgyal po'i mdo* (*Sūtra of the All-Creating King*) but also because the contents of sūtras and tantras are philosophically overlapping, if not contemplatively overlapping as well.[7] Given these difficulties involved in clearly defining sūtric and tantric traditions, the aforesaid "coincidence" is even more problematic.

Thus, as I have done in the investigation, whether a tradition is a fruitional vehicle or not should not be defined or confined by its association with the sūtras and/or the tantras. Instead, one should look at the nature of its philosophical and contemplative teachings to make such a judgment. My above conclusion regarding the three traditions under investigation, especially the contrast of gNubs chen's understanding and my alternative reading of the sTon mun teachings, clearly attests to the need and the values of such a methodology, for it not only deepens our understanding of the nature of a particular tradition but also gives Buddhist studies a more delicate treatment on the use of categories of analysis like causal and fruitional vehicles. After all, in the spirit of the logic of immediacy, categories should not be reified and boundaries should not be rigid. The unbounded wholeness of our being and knowing simultaneously embraces suddenness and gradualness, ultimacy and conventionality, effort and spontaneity. In the

[7] Similar arguments can be seen, *e.g.*, Sobisch, *Three-Vow Theories in Tibetan Buddhism*, 348 and D. Jackson, *Enlightenment by a Single Means*, 14-35.

mutual interfusion of these opposites, one weaves a tapestry of wholeness, on which myriad categories of analysis (*e.g.*, what is causal or fruitional, sūtric or tantric, etc.) or fields of knowledge (*e.g.*, what is historical, philosophical, contemplative, or polemic, etc.) interfuse each other to form its diverse and vibrant patterns.

II. The Significance of the Contemplative Perspective for the Study of Religion

Throughout the discussion in this dissertation, I have underscored the contemplative perspective both to understand the concerns of the contemplatives as they developed their religious traditions and to ferret out subtle philosophical and contemplative layers and distinctions within and between the teachings under investigation. These special concerns and nuances are significant in terms of improving our understanding of how religious practitioners shape the spiritual or contemplative elements of their traditions as well as how different teachings are practically related to each other. In fact, the above conclusion that the three traditions investigated are all fruitional vehicles embodying the logic of immediacy in contemplation is mainly owing to the use of the proposed contemplative perspective. Yet, perspectives such as the sociopolitical perspective usually taken in the field may distort or overlook the said concerns and thereby fail to ferret out the needed nuances because of their strong emphasis on the social and/or political agenda of the participants. Accordingly, the application of the proposed contemplative perspective provides an approach to remedy the situation so that we can better appreciate the religious concerns of the participants, the subtleties of the teachings, and the relationship between traditions. In addition to what is shown above, let me further illustrate the significance of the proposed perspective for the study of religion.

For example, my investigation of Shenhui's sudden teaching has revealed an

important contemplative structure that has been deemphasized or missed by various past studies done mostly from the sociopolitical perspective. As I discussed in Chapter 2, without recognizing Shenhui's delicate integration of sudden awakening and gradual cultivation that demands of its practitioner a holistic practice, these past studies generally (mis)construe Shenhui's sudden awakening only as an instantaneous experience of insight, or even less accurately, as a rhetorical strategy for the purpose of sectarianism or proselytism. Consequently, Shenhui's sudden teaching has been unfortunately characterized as having no or little significance for ongoing spiritual or contemplative practice, and his assessment of the Northern Chan practices, *i.e.*, "focusing the mind to enter *samādhi*; abiding the mind to view the pure; activating the mind for outward illumination; absorbing the mind for inner realization,"[8] has been only considered as a polemic criticism.

However, when the contemplative structure of Shenhui's sudden teaching is ferreted out with our proposed contemplative perspective, not only do we provide an alternative reading of Shenhui's teaching and thus better appreciate its nuances and values, but we also come to realize that his assessment of the Northern Chan practices may not just be polemic or "self-aggrandizing" but offer a genuine warning to Buddhist practitioners to look out for mistaken or one-sided understandings of Buddha's teachings.

That is, for Shenhui, even if the Northern Chan practices are subitist in nature, if the practitioners do not take the wholeness of the awakened mind as a constant and holistic guide, their arduous effort will be done in vain for they are only climbing some "dirt mound and barbarian tomb." In other words, Shenhui instructs practitioners to consider gradual cultivation within the context of sudden awakening, without which gradual

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[8] 『凝心入定，住心看淨，起心外照，攝心內證。』 (Hu, *Shenhui hesang yiji*, 133-134).

cultivation is faulty as it aims at a wrong direction. Furthermore, for Shenhui, due to the holistic being of the awakened mind, not only must the Northern Chan meditation be expanded to include all everyday actions and experiences, but it must also incorporate effortlessness (*e.g.*, in the form of "no-thought") into the practice to dissolve the dualistic or conceptual reification implied by the idea of gradualness. Such is the insight into Shenhui's above assessment, which is possible only when Shenhui's sudden teaching is better understood with our proposed contemplative perspective.

Similarly, with the aid of a contemplative lens, gNubs chen's characterization of the sTon mun simultaneity as a doctrinal oneness need not just be a polemic criticism, either. Rather, as I showed in Chapter 4, it can be construed as an honest critique of the teaching given out of concern for the potential impact of such oneness teaching on practitioners. Reminiscent of Shenhui's message, gNubs chen tells us that a direct access to the unborn ultimate can be flawed if it is derived from a mistaken understanding of reality, specifically the oneness that only considers the ultimate as true and the conventional as untrue. This contemplative rendition, on the one hand, offers us a vantage point going beyond the polemic so that we can better comprehend gNubs chen's concerns. On the other hand, it also gives us an opportunity or a context to further reflect on other possible philosophical and contemplative nuances embedded in the teachings under investigation, which we may otherwise miss or neglect. Indeed, my alternative reading of the sTon mun simultaneity has attested that the idea of the sTon mun simultaneity, and the idea of immediacy in general, is a rich field filled with layers of philosophical and contemplative subtleties. Nonetheless, to dig out these "hidden treasures," our proposed methodology has shown that one must be willing to first change one's perspective, *e.g.*, from the

perspective of a theorist or scholar to the perspective of a practitioner or contemplative. Then, without reifying either of the perspectives, one weaves them into "a tapestry of wholeness" so that its "diverse and vibrant patterns" can be better appreciated.

Furthermore, when the concerns of the contemplatives are taken into account, as I exemplified in Chapters 1 and 3, the emergence of Chan in developmental negotiations and the disappearance of sTon mun in syncretic assimilation are not just different religious traditions rising or falling in power, but different groups of practitioners seeking a contemplative realization or "presence" by integrating as many insights from similar teachings as possible, even if the presence may result in the disappearance of a religious sect. Here, what is important to these religious people is not necessarily to preserve their sectarian identities, or at least not only that. Rather, they aspire to experience the reality their teachings describe. In the process, by giving up sectarian identity, these contemplatives are not religious maniacs who persecute, or exclude the rights of, other religious practitioners. On the contrary, as I have argued, they are in the pursuit of an authentic practice, trying to realize the "ultimate concern" or the highest spirituality of a being. This "ultimate concern" in our logic of immediacy in contemplation is for one to reveal one's reflexively open awareness so that one embraces all possibilities with effortlessness and tenderness. This understanding, in effect, helps us to include as well as extend our reach beyond the polemic, the sectarian, and the historical so that we can better recognize the spiritual nuances of teachings under investigation as well as the values various changes in the historical movements of religious traditions (*e.g.*, rising or falling in power) may yield. Such are the functions and significances of the proposed contemplative perspective I have tried to demonstrate via our investigation for the study

of religion in general.

III. Being and Knowing in Wholeness: A New Paradigm for Religious Studies

Given the above recapitulation of what we have learned of and from the histories and teachings of the three Buddhist traditions and the reflection upon the significance of the proposed contemplative perspective, on the last stop, let us visit the issue of departure to conclude our journey motivated by finding an alternative to onto-theo-centric paradigms for religious studies. As a preliminary consideration, what I propose is twofold. The first is to offer a new paradigm derived from the discovered wholeness of being and knowing to understand the nature of religious knowledge, whereas the second (presented in the next section) reflects upon how the logic of immediacy informed by the religious knowledge of being and knowing in wholeness obtained through our study can be a source of inspiration to vitalize our everyday experience.

What is the nature of religious knowledge? Religious theories derived from onto-theo-centric paradigms usually center on a transcendental being or metaphysics that is embodied in a personal God or a metaphysical Godhead. These theories ultimately regard religious knowledge as a means to understanding the relationships between oppositional categories such as the unconditional and the conditional, the infinite/divine and the finite/mortal, or the sacred and the profane. As opposites, these categories exhibit some inherent tension, the resolution of which is one of the central issues of these religious theories.

Generally speaking, to resolve the tension between the oppositional categories, these theories either place the aforementioned opposites in different realms or collapse them into the Transcendental One or the Infinite God. For example, in ontological formation,

the unconditional, the infinite, or the sacred are characterized as the "Wholly Other" (to the conditional, the finite, or the profane), as Rudolf Otto characterizes the holy in his *The Idea of the Holy*. Being the "Wholly Other," the unconditional, the infinite, or the sacred are, as if they were literally and metaphorically, high up in a distant heaven, a transcendental realm, that is only accessible to the conditional, the finite, or the profane through some kind of "medium." As a variation to the above ontological formation, the oppositional categories are also characterized as only existing in different spaces and times, as Émile Durkheim and Mircea Eliade characterize the sacred and the profane in their respective works of *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* and *The Sacred and the Profane*. Therein, the separation between the opposites disappears through the power of a specific ritual held at a certain time and/or a certain place.

When collapsing the oppositional categories into the Transcendental One or the Infinite God, the theories based on onto-theo-centric paradigms always privilege the unconditional, the infinite, or the sacred. That is, it is always the conditional, the finite, or the profane that must be dissolved and returned to the unconditional, the infinite, or the sacred. So, Plotinus understands the conditional or the finite as the emanation of the One that is unconditional and infinite. Nicholas of Cusa coincides the "opposites" just to highlight the pervasive nature of the Infinite God. In monotheistic formation, the mortal or the profane has original sins or impurities, and consequently they must atone and accept grace from the divine or the sacred so that they can return and be in the presence of the divine or the sacred again.

The above understandings, in which the opposites are either placed in different realms or collapsed into the Oneness or Godhead, evidently value a distant metaphysical

or transcendental realm over our present phenomenal or immanent existence. By valuing a transcendental ideal, these understandings, in effect, inspire their adherents to strive for such an ideal, but at the risk of degrading or dejecting our phenomenal or immanent reality. In this way, as the adherents strive to establish a connection with the highest being, they potentially lose the connection with their ongoing being, which alienates oneself from others as well as from the highest being, for the highest being without other beings can never be the highest being that is unconditional, infinite, or sacred.

As an alternative, we learn from our investigation that the wholeness which embraces the principle of nonduality offers a new paradigm to resolve the tension between the oppositional categories. Going beyond the above ontological and/or reductionist solutions, the discussed wholeness brings the seemingly metaphysical categories into a holistic field, in which ontology and epistemology, being and knowing, are thoroughly interfusing in a dynamic of nonduality. With this nondual interfusion of being and knowing, immediacy is immanent. Accordingly, there is no need for any "medium," including spiritual or conceptual intermediaries,[9] and the so-called "oppositional categories" are regarded as demonstrating epistemic diversity while having no ontic fixity or rigidity.

In other words, when being and knowing, ontology and epistemology, belong to two categories and are thus dualistic, it is natural to claim, "immediacy is derived" and "all begins through the intermediary." Given this, one is then conceptually bound to "think out the intermediary." On the other hand, when one's states of being and knowing completely interfuse and permeate each other, there is no intermediary to *know oneself*,

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[9] Yet, the fact that immediacy is immanent does not reject "nominal intermediaries" as manifestations. It only rejects intermediaries that are reified as such and thus lead one to conceptually separate what are not separate in reality.

for one already manifests oneself in the knowing and one's knowing embodies oneself in that particular temporal-spatial continuum. [10] As a result, in this nondual ontological-epistemological continuum, finite or conditional manifestations, in terms of one's everyday actions and experiences, are not intermediaries for one to realize the infinite or unconditional being, but the embodiments of the infinite or unconditional being in the continuum, whereas the infinite or unconditional being is the open matrix underlying the finite or conditional manifestations.

This is similar to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's idea of the visible being the active expression of the invisible and the invisible being the openness that sustains the visible. For Merleau-Ponty, the visible is a "field of being," expressing "a certain style, a certain manner of managing the domain of space and time over which it has competency, of pronouncing, of articulating that domain, of radiating about a wholly virtual center—in short a certain manner of being, in the active sense, a certain *Wesen*, in the sense that, says Heidegger, this word has when it is used as a verb."[11] As the manner of being, the visible, the conditional, is not confined in the here or in the now; rather, it is in the present announcing and at the same time concealing the "immense latent content of the past, the future, and the elsewhere."[12] This immense latent content, the invisible, however is not "the positing of a content, but the opening of a dimension that can never again be closed."[13] As an openness, this invisible "is therefore not a *de facto* invisible, like an object hidden behind another, and not an absolute invisible, that would have nothing to do with the visible. Rather it is the invisible *of* this world, that which inhabits

[10] This however does not deny the validity to "think out the intermediary" as far as cultural critique is concerned.
[11] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* (translated by Alphonso Lingis), 115.
[12] Ibid, 114.
[13] Ibid, 151.

this world, sustains it, and renders it visible, its own and interior possibility, the Being of this being."[14]

In the wholeness of being and knowing, the conditional is an embodiment of the unconditional in a particular temporal-spatial continuum, but, in Merleau-Ponty's sense, the conditional is not *in* time or *in* space, but a dynamic display in (and of) the present moment. As a dynamic display of the present, the conditional is an active expression that reveals the "immense latent content of the past, the future, and the elsewhere." But, this "immense latent content," the unconditional, is not an unknown invariant. Rather, it is a basis-just-as-it-is, the primordial basis, "that which inhabits this world, sustains it, and renders it visible, its own and interior possibility, the Being of this being." In this way, the conditional and the unconditional, and all the aforementioned opposites, are neither one nor two, but a nondual pair constantly and mutually informing each other in the wholeness of reality, of which both are expressions further attesting to the multiplicity in its totality. This wholeness of reality however is not simply an objective reality; it is one's being and knowing in wholeness, for the wholeness, in Merleau-Ponty's words, is the *horizon*, rather than the production of nothingness. Being the horizon, the wholeness does not frame the subject and the object as ontological opposites, for the horizon includes the seer; "he who sees is of it and is in it."[15]

The above preliminary discussion, even though sketchy, still presents a possible new paradigm based on the proposed wholeness of being and knowing for us to discuss the relationship between oppositional categories like the conditional and the unconditional. In this new paradigm, rather than formulating the opposites dualistically or monistically,

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[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid, 100.

one considers them as interconnected or nondual pairs that are the expressions of reality in wholeness. This reality of wholeness is closely related to one's being and knowing. In this way, the search for the highest being would not be oriented toward transcendence or dissolution; thus it does not emphasize a transcendental or monistic ideal. Instead, it is to turn inwardly to one's nondual wholeness. As it is a wholeness, the without is not excluded as one searches the within, for they form the *gestalt* in unity and in diversity. In this reality of wholeness, not only will there be no degradation of our immanent existence, but there will be no "abstract truth" divorced from one's subjective engagement, either. Yet, this subjective engagement is not arbitrary, for it is an engagement in and of the being. Thus, being is not being to be grasped or reified, but being to know. In Merleau-Ponty's words, perhaps, it is that "I *am* a *knowing*" (italics added),[16] even if I don't know everything of myself.

Noticeably, in presenting the new paradigm for religious studies, I have borrowed, and compared the proposed wholeness with, Merleau-Ponty's idea, especially, his idea of the visible and the invisible. To further understand the applicability of the new paradigm and advance the comparison, more research is certainly needed. Is the wholeness that embraces the principles of nonduality and spontaneity applicable to monotheistic and/or monistic traditions? Does the wholeness that thoroughly integrates being and knowing necessarily bring down the highest being from the heaven and consequently reduce its irreducible mystery to the order of beings, as Heidegger criticized onto-theology? In terms of comparison, how is Merleau-Ponty's idea of the *Gestalt* related to the proposed wholeness of being and knowing? Is the interfusion of one's being and knowing in any way compatible with Merleau-Ponty's chiasm? These questions, as interesting and as

[16] Ibid, 32.

important as they are, can only be left for future research.

IV. The Logic of Immediacy: A Vitalization of Everyday Experience

Regarding the changing world, Merleau-Ponty positively states that "the existing world exists in the interrogative mode."[17] As one questions, "What do I know?", he remarks, one should also understand that this questioning

> extends to the idea of knowing itself; it invokes some intelligible place where the facts, examples, ideas I lack, should be found; it intimates that the interrogative is not a mode derived by inversion or by reversal of the indicative and of the positive, is neither an affirmation nor a negation veiled or expected, but an original manner of aiming at something, as it were a *question-knowing*, which by principle no statement or "answer" can go beyond and which perhaps therefore is the proper mode of our relationship with Being, as though it were the mute or reticent interlocutor of our questions.[18]

Similar to Merleau-Ponty's "*question-knowing*" that has an "original manner of aiming at something," the logic of immediacy asks its practitioner to participate in the changing world with a spontaneous and open knowing directly aiming at the nature of reality. Here, not only is the direct aiming "the proper mode of our relationship with Being," but also it is an artful endeavor that must involve gradual cultivation, conventional means, as well as skillful effort in their proper contexts. As if it were to climb an ascending spiral, the spontaneous and open knowing of the direct aiming, with the power of gradual cultivation, conventional means, and skillful effort, pervades one's "view," that is, the holistic being of one's "knowing and seeing" discussed in Chapter 2. Here, the logic of immediacy is crucial, as it sets not only the compass for the practitioner to find the "nine-story platform" rather than some "dirt mound and barbarian tomb," but

[17] Ibid, 103.
[18] Ibid, 129.

also the context for all the "intermediary" practices to be employed without the dualistic and conceptual bondages and limitations implied in their original contexts (*i.e.*, in the contexts of gradualness, conventionality, and arduous effort).

As one follows the logic of immediacy to simultaneously embrace suddenness and gradualness, ultimacy and conventionality, effort and spontaneity, one deconstructs their boundaries and interfuses them into an integral whole. This existence in total integration is, on the one hand, the state of consummation and, on the other hand, a tapestry of wholeness, on which myriad categories of analysis or fields of knowledge are woven together to form its diverse and vibrant patterns which we call "everyday experiences." In this way, the logic of immediacy grounds one's existential consummation in everyday life, but it grounds the consummation with a vitalization that is rooted in one's "unique style or manner" of knowing, namely, a subjective engagement that is directly in and of the being. Here, the reality is not so much characterized by the statement, "I think, therefore I am." Instead, it is that "I *am* a *knowing*," a knowing that is ever-lively in openness and love as long as one does not limit it with habitual tendency or conceptual reification. Insofar as it is ever lively, this open and compassionate knowing also helps its practitioner untangle habitual tendency and conceptual reification. In mutual interfusion and permeation, the logic of immediacy makes a disentanglement a no-entanglement, with which everything unfolds itself in non-abiding becoming.

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